MADRAS INFORMATION

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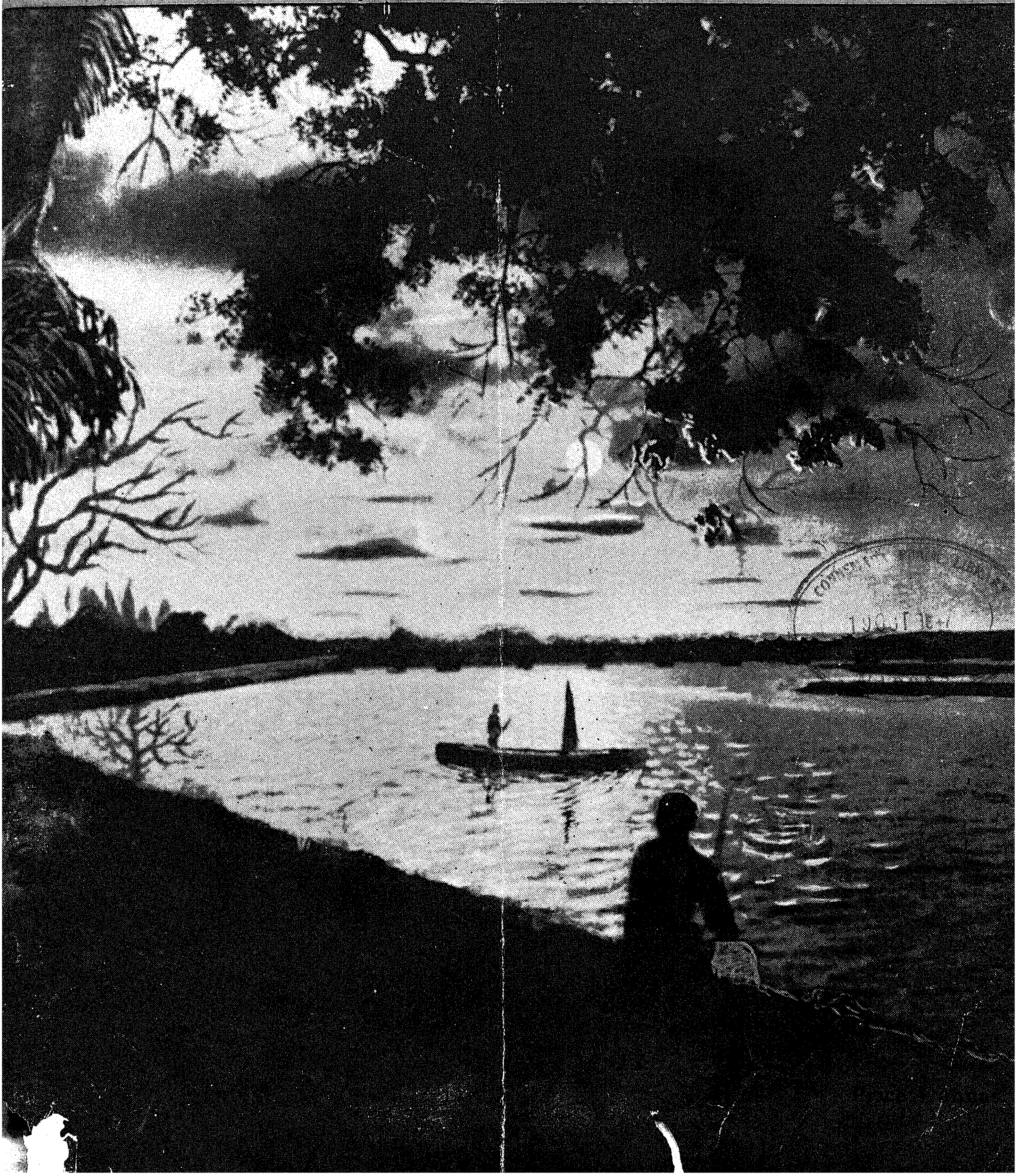

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Readers are invited to send questions seeking clarification of the policy of the Government or allied matters. Answers will be published as soon as possible.

Madras Information

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Vol. I, No. 22 "WE SEEK TO SERVE AND NOT TO COMPETE" October 11, 1947

Extension of Prohibition

On October 1, 1947, Prohibition was extended to eight more districts, two in the Andhra area, Malabar, South Kanara and four in Tamil area bringing the total number of 'dry' districts in the province to 16. These represent roughly two-thirds of the area of the province, the biggest compact area in the country, as a whole in which prohibition of liquor making, liquor selling and liquor drinking are officially enforced. It has been said before, but it bears repetition, that in no other province in India has so extensive a programme of prohibition, one of the most important items on the constructive programme of the Congress, been implemented so far. Complaints are heard that the Madras Government are going ahead rather too hastily in this respect in contrast to the cautious manner in which other provincial Governments are proceeding. There are also complaints that the Government are wilfully sacrificing revenue to the tune of Rs. 17 crores annually very badly needed for ameliorative and nation-building purposes in pursuit of a socio-political experiment. To these critics the answer is that when once it is granted that prohibition is a good and beneficient measure and is justified by its own intrinsic merits, the Government are perfectly justified in going ahead with a reform of such proved and unquestionable benefit. Again the argument that extension of prohibition would result in curtailing funds essential for nation-building activities ignores the consideration that preventing people from being victimised to the dangerous, unhealthy and wasteful habit of drinking liquor and getting intoxicated is in itself an outstanding nation-building activity, the effects of which on the promotion of the general well-being of the poorer sections of the population in the rural parts cannot be considered insignificant.

Drawbacks noted

The fundamental basic principle implicit in prohibition being accepted, the next important thing is to bend all efforts to see that the reform is an unmitigated success and that loopholes which have made themselves manifest in the course of its working so far are eliminated. Some of these loopholes which require immediate tackling may be mentioned. First, there is the problem of illicit distillation; secondly, we have the problem of finding suitable employment for the toddy-tappers, who lose their means of livelihood by the prohibition of tapping; thirdly, there is the question of prohibiting drunkenness which is a part and parcel of the problem of prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. The Government are fully alive to these drawbacks and loopholes in the execution of the prohibition programme and have already taken or are taking steps to eliminate or tackle them. The problem of stopping illicit distillation is, of course, a difficult and formidable one, and can be effectively solved only by unceasing vigilance on the part of the enforcement staff and imposing deterrent punishments on those who resort to it on the one hand and by the active co-operation and assistance of the public in the detection of cases of illicit distillation on the other. When public opinion asserts itself and every case of illicit distillation is brought to light, the distiller and the bootlegger will find their trade gone and if side by side deterrent punishments are awarded to these clandestine manufactures of intoxicants, the success of the campaign is assured. The Government have already taken steps to put a check on would-be drunkards trekking into non-prohibition areas for a drink by prohibiting the opening of liquor shops within a range of 5 miles of the prohibition area and by demarcating a further belt area extending over another 5 miles beyond. They have also decided to bring in legislation to amend the Abkari Act to make drunkenness itself an offence. Lastly, they have sought the co-operation of neighbouring States like Mysore, Hyderabad, Travancore and Pudukkottai to enforce the intentions of the Prohibition policy pursued by them. Similarly legislation is also under contemplation, as stated by the Hon'ble the Prime Minister, to impose collective fines on villages which report a large number of prohibition offences like illicit distillation.

Ameliorative measures

Thus every effort is being made to tighten up the loose strings and to cover up the loopholes so far discovered in the working of prohibition. Side by side, the Government are undertaking a number of measures intended to provide counter-attractions to the

drink habit to which villagers are addicted, to rehabilitate the families of erstwhile drunkards, to provide healthy recreation to the villagers and to encourage thrift and the habit of saving. A detailed statement of the ameliorative measures, which have been formulated and are being enforced in the prohibition districts, prepared by Mr. V. N. Kudva, Prohibition Commissioner, is published elsewhere in this issue. If the villagers take the fullest advantage of these measures and systematically practise thrift and economy, they will find that a new life has come to them. Government officials entrusted with the working of ameliorative measures will help them in all possible ways to achieve this better life and enable them to go along the road to prosperity and family peace and harmony. Lastly, the problem of usefully employing toddy tappers in alternative occupations like jaggery manufacture is engaging the serious attention of the Government.

Prohibition has come to stay in the province; and as the Hon'ble Mr. Baktavatsalam is reported to have said in one of his speeches in the Trichinopoly district, there can be no going back upon it now. The loss of revenue on account of prohibition is unavoidable; but the present loss will be a potential gain if the people for whose benefit the reform is introduced respond to the call of abstinence and give up an age-old habit which has been continuously sapping their physical vitality, encouraging them to commit crimes and misdeeds against fellow human beings and reducing them to pauperism and economic misery. When the standard of life of the people improves on account of giving up a deleterious habit and realization of the advantages of thrift and saving and taking to other kinds of productive work, their taxable capacity will also improve and the loss of Governmental revenue can be made good at least in some measure.

Madras Government Press Notes

Agriculture

Area under ginger

The area under ginger up to 31st August 1947 is estimated at 10,900 acres in Malabar and 800 acres in South Kanara, as against 11,400 acres in Malabar and 800 acres in South Kanara, estimated for the corresponding period of the previous year. The condition of the crop is reported to be fairly good and the yield per acre is expected to be normal.

Scheme for control of pests

As part of the Five Year-Plan of Food production relating to the Agricultural Department, the Director of Agriculture has prepared a comprehensive scheme for the control of pests and diseases of crops. The expenditure anticipated in the current year on this account is estimated at Rs. 1,00,000 recurring, for purchase of fungicides, and Rs. 55,000 non-recurring, on capital cost for the purchase of sprayers.

It may be mentioned that the Government have been receiving reports about the considerable damage caused to standing crops in the Tanjore district by rats.

They have in that connection approved the Director of Agriculture's proposal to extend the operations for combating rat pest in that district by using cynogas, and sanctioned the scheme for a period of one year in the first instance at a cost not exceeding Rs. 14,000 non-recurring and Rs. 16,000 recurring. A nominal fee of three pies per every rat hole treated with cynogas subject to a maximum of annas four per acre is proposed to be levied.

Pepper

Up to 25th August 1947, the area under pepper in the districts of Malabar and South Kanara is estimated at 95,000 acres—86,000 acres in Malabar and 9,000 acres in South Kanara, as against 99,300 acres estimated for the corresponding period in the previous year and a finally recorded area of 97,008 acres. The condition of the crop is fair and the yield per acre is expected to be normal.

Wholesale prices of pepper per imperial maund, as reported from the important market centres on 6th September 1947 were Rs. 69–13–0 in Tellicherry, Rs. 67–7–0 in Calicut and Rs. 66–2–0 in Mangalore.

Dam across the Bhavani River

The Government of Madras have approved an expenditure of Rs. 7 crores, including direct and indirect charges and omitting arrears of simple interest or Rs. 8·79 crores on the construction of a dam across the Bhavani river, near Satyamangalam in Coimbatore district, together with the connected distributary canals.

A betterment tax of Rs. 100 per acre will also be levied from the owners of the lands who are benefited by the project.

The Board of Revenue has been asked to submit along with the detailed report, the revenue aspects of the Betterment Tax.

Distribution of Manure

The Government have now decided to supply manure to the full value of the food bonus coupons presented by the ryots. These coupons will be supplied to ryots shortly. They must be presented before the Agricultural demonstrators who are entrusted with the distribution of manures, says a Press Note issued by the Government of Madras.

In the instructions issued to the producers in connection with the paddy bonus scheme, the Board of Revenue (Civil Supplies) stated that in purchasing manure, against the food bonus coupons, the ryots should pay to the dealer one half of the value in cash and the food bonus coupons will be accepted only for the other half of the value of the manure supplied. The Government have now decided to supply manure to the full value of the food bonus coupons presented by the ryots. These coupons will be supplied to ryots shortly. They may be presented before the Agricultural demonstrators who are entrusted with the

distribution of manures. Supply of manures (i.e., groundnut cake, chemical fertilizers and green manure seeds) against the food bonus coupons will be subject to availability of stocks. The producers are also informed that the supply of manure against the food bonus coupons will *not* be in addition to the quantity for which permits have been issued to them by the village committees but will be only against the quantity mentioned in the permits. Ryots should therefore produce the permits issued to them by the village committees before the Agricultural Demonstrator along with the food bonus coupons when claiming delivery of manures.

Agriculturists' Relief Act

The number of cases under the Agriculturists' Relief Act disposed of by civil courts in the Province for the quarter ending 30th June 1947, is 210. For the period between 22nd March 1938 (when the Act came into force) and 30th June 1947 (covering 112 months) the number of cases disposed is 207,307.

The amount involved in applications disposed of under sections 8, 9, 13, 18 (1), 19, and 19-A of the Act for the quarter ending 30th June 1947 is Rs. 2,72,711. The amount involved in such applications for the period between 22nd March 1938 and 30th June 1947 stands at Rs. 9,77,24,340.

The amount scaled down by the courts on applications of indebted agriculturists for the quarter ending 30th June 1947 is Rs. 1,84,983. For the period between 22nd March 1938 and 30th June 1947 the amount scaled down stands at Rs. 4,69,74,695.

The amount of reduction by scaling down of debts for the quarter ending 30th June 1947 is Rs. 87,728. For the period between 22nd March 1938 and 30th June 1947 the amount of reduction by scaling down debts is Rs. 5,07,49,645 and the percentage of reduction is 52.

The number of cases pending at the close of the quarter ending 30th June 1947 and that for the period between 22nd March 1938 and 30th June 1947 is 401.

The figures given above exclude the number of cases voluntarily settled by parties without recourse to courts.

Development

P.C.C. Societies in Malabar

Representations are being received by the Government that the producers-cum-consumers societies in Malabar district are not working properly and that an enquiry committee may be constituted to examine the working of the societies.

The Government consider that it is not necessary to constitute a committee to enquire into their working. They however desire to make it clear that the producers-cum-consumers societies in Malabar are not above criticism and that they are not exempt from the ordinary measures of control which the Collector and supply staff are entitled to enforce under the rules.

Building Conditions in Factories

The designs of buildings and layout of machinery in many existing factories are not satisfactory. Unsatisfactory design and construction result in trying working conditions and make subsequent alterations necessary for securing the health, safety and welfare of workers, difficult and often impossible. Proper arrangements for the disposal of industrial and trade wastes are also lacking in many factories with the result that the sanitation of the area is affected. With a view to remedy these defects, the Government of India have under consideration the revision of the Factories Act. The Act when amended will provide—

(*a*) that plans, designs and specifications of new factory buildings or extensions to existing factory premises and the proposed layout of plant and machinery should be submitted to the Chief Inspector of Factories before construction is undertaken and

(*b*) that adequate arrangements should be made for the disposal of industrial and trade wastes.

When the Act is amended, the Government intend to enforce these provisions strictly. If the Inspectorate should find that the buildings are not so constructed or the layout is not such as to provide adequately for the health, safety and welfare of workers, factory owners would be required to undertake alterations or in extreme cases even demolition of buildings found unsuitable. This would entail loss. The Government would therefore invite the attention of those who intend to put up new factories or extend existing capacity to the proposed amendment and advise them that it would be in their own interest to submit the plans, designs and specifications of buildings in the first instance to the Chief Inspector of Factories, Madras, before plans are submitted to the executive authorities of local bodies as required by section 194 of the Madras Local Boards Act and section 250 of the Madras District Municipalities Act. The Chief Inspector of Factories will give the necessary advice with due expedition. As regards the proper disposal of industrial and trade wastes, the Director of Public Health, Madras, should be consulted.

Compensation to M.E.S.C. undertaking

Sri T. R. Venkatarama Sastriar, in his statement to the Press criticising the proposed legislation for the abolition of zamindaris, has remarked that in the case of the Madras Electric Supply Company, Limited, taken over by the Government, compensation was paid at 3 per cent rate, that is, 33 times the annual income. Under section 7 (1) of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, under which the M.E.S.C. undertaking was purchased, the purchase price payable to the company was the fair market value at the time of purchase. As the law on the subject stands at present, there is no other basis on which the transfer from the company to the Government could be effected. The Government and the M.E.S.C. have appointed Messrs. Merz and McLellan as common valuers for the undertaking. The Government have entered into agreements with the M.E.S.C., and the valuers, according to which the undertaking should be valued in accordance with the statutory provisions in the Indian Electricity Act, 1910. The Government have paid the company a sum of Rs. 133·33 lakhs on account on 29th August 1947 when they took possession of the undertaking, pending the valuation by the valuers. If the valuers finally assess the market value of the concern, at a figure greater than the amount already paid to the company, the Government have undertaken to pay the company interest at 3 per cent on the balance of the total amount awarded by the valuers as the fair

market price. In case of dispute, there is provision for appointing a common arbitrator or arbitrators whose decision will be binding on both parties. It is not correct to say that the Government have valued the concern on the basis of capitalizing the present income of the company. The present income or profit of the company will not be taken into consideration at all in arriving at the fair market value. The Government would therefore point out that it is grossly incorrect to say that Government are paying M.E.S.C. 33 times their annual income or profit.

An Industrial dispute

An industrial dispute arose between the workers and management of the East Asiatic Co., Ltd., Madras. As the parties to the dispute were unable to arrive at an amicable settlement, the dispute was referred for adjudication. During the enquiry, the parties compromised their differences and on the request of both parties the Tribunal has passed a compromise award. According to the terms of the award, all the workers who were on the rolls on 31st March 1947 will be taken back at Rayapuram oil mills on the same terms and conditions of service as before. Such of the permanent workers who have been working at Tondiarpet will be paid basic wages and dearness allowance at the same rate as they were getting at Rayapuram Mills on 31st March 1947. Overtime and night shift work will be paid in accordance with the Factories Act. The management will request the Committee appointed under the Provident Fund Rules to take steps for the extension of Provident Fund benefits to all permanent workers irrespective of their basic wages. The management will provide, as before, uniforms to permanent workers only. In the event of the management taking in permanent workers in future, preference will be given to such of the temporary workers then on rolls in accordance with seniority and skill. In computing the period of service of a permanent worker, his service previous to the suspension of mill business in 1945 shall be taken into account. The management will make a consolidated payment of one month's basic wages to all permanent workers on rolls on 31st March 1947 and agrees to pay basic wages only during the period permanent workers have not been employed, that is, from 7th June 1947 till 9th July 1947 and Independence Day bonus of fourteen days' basic wages will be paid to all permanent workers.

The existing rate of dearness allowance is to continue. This arrangement is to be in force for one year from the date, the award is accepted by the Provincial Government. The Union undertakes to furnish the management with the by-laws of the Union now in force and furnish amendments made thereto from time to time and on being satisfied that such by-laws are in conformity with the provisions of the Trade Unions Act and in conformity with all other provisions of law, the management will recognize the Union. The workers have no further claim under the order of the Provincial Government, dated 9th July 1947. The question of bonus for the year 1947 excepting the Independence Bonus alone is left open. The parties should put up suggestions, if any, for the revision of these terms by the first week of June 1948 and as far as possible settle the matters raised before 1st September 1948.

A Trade Dispute

There was a dispute between the workers and management of the Presidency Transport, Limited, Madras, in respect of certain matters. As the parties to the dispute were unable to arrive at an amicable settlement, the dispute was referred to Sri P. Markandeyulu, as Industrial Tribunal, for adjudication. After enquiry, the Tribunal has submitted its report and made the following recommendations:—

Conductor Subramanyam should be reinstated in his appointment on his signing the entry in the punishment register.

Inspector Radhakrishnan should be reinstated in his appointment on his submitting an explanation to the management for his absence from duty on the 2nd and 3rd of May 1947.

Driver Habibulla should submit a written apology to the Managing Director within a fortnight from the date of the publication of this award for not having signed in the log-sheet and for having created a scene in the Managing Director's office on 4th June 1947, and on his doing so, he should be reinstated in his appointment with effect from the date of which the apology is tendered. He is entitled to his pay and allowance up to and including 4th June 1947 but not for the subsequent period.

Driver Ali Hussain is not entitled to be reinstated, but should be paid his pay and allowance up to and including 8th June 1947.

Conductor Rajagopal will be reinstated in his appointment on condition that he hands over to the Managing Director within 15 days from the date of the publication of this award, a letter of apology for having quarrelled with Ansar on 9th May 1947. He will be entitled to pay and allowances up to and including 9th May 1947 but not to the pay and allowances between that date and the date of his reinstatement.

Conductors as well as drivers should be given a holiday every week with pay.

One more uniform should be supplied, within a period of two months from the date of publication of this award, to every driver and conductor who have been supplied with a uniform after this dispute was referred for adjudication. To those who have not been supplied even with one uniform, two uniforms should be given within the same period including those who have been reinstated during the course of this enquiry as well as those who are directed to be reinstated by this award.

The company should run 18 buses in route No. 1 (Triplicane to Parry's Corner and back) from morning till night and two sets of drivers and conductors should be employed in each bus, one set in the morning and the other in the evening. No extra or special buses should be run in route No. 1, except with the specific permission in writing of the Police or the Road Traffic Board or some other department of the Government having jurisdiction over this matter. If such permission is obtained, and if it is found necessary to employ the same set of drivers and conductors both in the morning and in the evening, then the inconvenience or the disadvantage should be distributed equally and impartially among all the drivers and conductors.

The hours of work for a motor driver and the interval of rest that he should have shall be regulated by the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act of 1939 and the rules framed under the Act.

No conductor of a bus shall be asked to work for more than ten hours a day against his will.

Every employee of the company shall, within two months from the date of the publication of this award, be provided with a copy of the Standing Orders and the rules regulating the Provident Fund on payment of one anna per copy.

Concessions to State Transport Workers

Towards the beginning of August 1947 the Transport Commissioner brought to the notice of the Government that there was a feeling of discontent among the State Transport Workers, that representations had been made on their behalf for the immediate grant of certain concessions and that the decisions of the Government might be made known to them as soon as possible. The Government after carefully considering the representation have allowed the following concessions :—

(1) That checking inspectors and time-keepers in the State Transport Service be paid batta at the rate applicable to conductors with effect from the dates of their employment ;

(2) that the batta granted to the drivers and conductors be paid retrospectively from the dates of their employment in the State Transport Service ;

(3) that the workers in the State Transport Service, the Government Automobile Workshop and to Civil Supplies Transport Unit be paid temporary extra pay at the same rates as the interim relief awarded by the Court of Enquiry constituted to investigate the conditions of service of employees in motor transport organizations ; and

(4) that the members of the traffic staff of the Government Bus Service be allowed two holidays in rotation according to convenience in connection with the Independence Day.

The Government do not consider it desirable now to pursue the question of increasing the rates of batta allowed to the drivers and conductors in the State Transport Service as the whole question of their emoluments may have to be reviewed in the light of the recommendations that will be made by the Court of Enquiry.

The Government do not consider that there is any justification for complying with the request of the State Transport workers for the grant of a bonus of two months' pay, when employees of other Government business undertakings and departments are not given any bonus in connection with the Independence Day celebrations.

The Government have also permitted the Transport Commissioner to carry on correspondence relating to the workers of the State Transport Service with Messrs. Seetharama Naidu and P. Ranganathan, Joint Secretary and President respectively of the Government Transport and General Workers Union until the Union is registered and recognized.

Food

Import of semolina

In Press Note No. 158, dated 28th June 1947, it was announced that from 1st August 1947 the Government would recommend to the Chief Controller of Imports, New Delhi, applications for the import of semolina from overseas, only from those who possess a licence under the Madras Foodgrains Control Order to deal in wheat products. In view of the acute food position in the Province, the Government desire to encourage the import of as much semolina as possible from overseas by private trade. They have therefore decided to recommend up to 31st October 1947 all applications whether the applicants possess a licence under the Madras Foodgrains Control Order or not provided non-licensees give an undertaking, while sending their applications, that they will not ask for a temporary licence and that the imported stocks will be disposed of only through the licensees under the Madras Foodgrains Control Order, after giving due intimation to the Commissioner of Civil Supplies.

Bengal-gram Supply Reduced

Originally the Government of India allotted under the Rabi plan for 1947–49 33,000 tons of Bengal-gram to the Madras Province. As the gram position in India deteriorated and the actual surplus was found to be only one-half of the surplus originally estimated, the quota to the Madras Province has been reduced to 17,000 tons, which has to be procured from Sind, the Rajputna States and Bahawalpur. As a result, it has become necessary for the Government to reduce from 1st October 1947 the scale of supply of Bengal-gram ration in the Madras City from 3/8 to ¼ of the total pulses ration.

Bajra for Trichinopoly

A consignment of 1,556 bags of bajra received at Tuticorin has been allotted to Trichinopoly for distribution in the district. The bajra will be released for sale at the locally prevailing prices.

Allotment of Rice

According to information now available it is likely that 7,000 tons of rice from overseas and 2,000 tons of rice from Orissa will be received during October 1947, and these have been tentatively allotted as follows :—

(1) Vizagapatam district—2,000 tons of Orissa rice and 4,000 tons of rice from overseas ; and

(2) Malabar—3,000 tons of rice from overseas.

A quota of 12,000 tons of rice has been allotted to Coimbatore district. Of this only 8,000 tons will be the quota for October and the balance of 4,000 tons is intended for November 1947. The Government have directed that the quotas allotted to Tinnevelly, Coimbatore and Malabar from the Tanjore area may be supplied either as rice or paddy, whichever is available.

The following rice quotas have been fixed by the Commissioner of Civil Supplies for October 1947 for the deficit districts as follows :—

		TONS.
1	Vizagapatam	8,000
2	Kurnool	500
3	Bellary	1,500
4	Anantapur	500
5	Madras	13,000
6	Tinnevelly	500
7	Coimbatore	12,000
8	Malabar	10,000
9	Nilgiris	2,000
10	S. I. Railway	1,350
11	M.S.M. Railway ..	1,696
12	Sandur	30
13	Banganaplle	65
14	Pudukottah	500

Export of Jaggery

The greater part of the jaggery quotas exported from this Province to places in India outside the Province was usually exported only by established dealers, i.e., dealers who have been in the jaggery trade for a considerable time. However, as it was represented to the Government that conditions in the Chittoor district are peculiar, there being only a very few established dealers in that district, the Government have on the representation made by producers issued orders to the effect that out of the quotas allotted for export from Chittoor district to places

in India outside the province permits should be issued as shown below :—

To established dealers—Up to 37½ per cent of the total quota.

To producers—Up to 37½ per cent of the total quota.

To dealers who are new entrants—Up to 25 per cent of the total quota.

In order to guard against the possibility of the quota ear-marked for export by producers not being moved sufficiently quickly, the Government have had to stipulate that in case the producers are not able to export their quota of 37½ per cent within a reasonable time to be fixed by the Collector of Chittoor the balance should be allotted to the dealers. The Government are anxious at the same time that the producers of the Chittoor district should take full advantage of this concession. Producers of jaggery are therefore advised to approach the Collector of Chittoor for export permits in respect of the 37½ per cent of the quota ear-marked for them. The question of increasing the producers' quota will be considered if they are able to move the quota already allotted to them.

Paddy Prices

The Government have decided that a slightly lower price should be given to all varieties of short term paddy, which were classified under the third sort, but for which rates were fixed as per II sort paddy till the end of November 1947, than the rates applicable to paddy classified all along as II sort. They have directed that all such paddy in the districts of Tanjore, Chingleput, Trichinopoly and South Arcot, be paid for at the following rate at the village site up to 30th November 1947 :—

	PER MAUND. RS. A. P.
Tanjore	4 13 0
Chingleput	5 3 6
Trichinopoly ..	4 15 9
South Aroct	4 15 4

In other districts the short term paddy raised to II sort should be paid for at the rates appropriate to the II sort. The bonus sanctioned by the Government in July 1947 will be granted for deliveries of the short term paddy made before 31st October 1946 in addition to the increase in prices resulting from the up-grading of III sort paddy into II sort.

The decision has been arrived at in view of the representations made to the Government that in the case of certain varieties of short term paddy, now raised to II sort, the percentage of outturn or rice from paddy is lower than that obtained from the varieties originally classified under II sort, and that therefore millers will be put to loss if they have to purchase these varieties of paddy at the usual II sort rates and supply rice at the F.O.R. price fixed for II sort.

Miscellaneous

Petrol coupons

In a Press Note, dated 13th March 1947, the Government had stated that as the petrol quota allowed for the Province was inadequate to maintain the existing services no guarantee could be given to intending purchasers of army vehicles regarding the issue of petrol to such vehicles. A large number of vehicles had already been purchased by the public from the army surplus stocks and it would have been a great hardship to refuse the issue of petrol to all of them. The Provisional Rationing Officer has therefore allowed up to now a number of such vehicles to run on petrol. Although these ex-army vehicles are allowed only a restricted quantity of petrol, the grant of petrol to such a large of number additional vehicles has seriously affected the petrol position and it is now found difficult to maintain the existing services. Government therefore desire to bring to the notice of the public that no allowance of petrol will be made to ex-army vehicles registered after 1st September 1947 and in the case of such vehicles which are permitted to run on petrol, no petrol, will be allowed on transfer of ownership unless the new owner satisfies the Provincial Rationing Officer that the vehicle is absolutely necessary for him in the public interest.

Persons who have been granted new route permits for vehicles to run as buses are warned that the Government can give no guarantee of issue of petrol for vehicles acquired by them. They are therefore advised to go in for vehicles which will run on diesel oil.

Belt Areas for prohibition districts

The question of creating "belt areas" round prohibition districts has been engaging the attention of the Government for some time past. Experience has shown that the creation of such belts is necessary in order to make the enforcement of prohibition water-tight. Government have, therefore, ordered the creation of five-mile shopless belt areas round the Prohibition districts, wherein no toddy shops will be permitted as also other abkari and opium shops, except those of certain categories.

New Municipal Councillors

The Government have directed that the Councillors of all Municipal Councils in the Province, except those of Gudivada, Guntur, Tenali, Tirupati, Hindupur, Cuddalore, Madura and Trichinopoly, elected at the ordinary elections now in progress should enter upon their office on the 2nd of October 1947. Separate orders will issue as regards the Councillors of the excluded municipalities referred to above.

'A and B' Classes in L.I.M.

As a result of the re-examination of the question relating to the distinction between "A" and "B" class practitioners of Indian Medicine, the Government have directed that the distinction between the two classes of practitioners should be maintained as before, subject to such orders as Government may pass from time to time regarding the qualifications which practitioners should possess for inclusion in the two classes "A" and "B".

Firewood Ration

In the Press Note issued on 14th August 1947 the Government announced a 25 per cent cut in the normal scale of firewood ration in the City of Madras from the third quarter of August 1947 to 30th September 1947. As the supply position of firewood in the City has not yet improved, the Government have decided to continue the cut from 1st to 31st October 1947.

The term 'Razaka'

In Press Communiqué No. 24, dated the 24th April 1947, the Government invited the opinion of the members of the washermen community in this Province on the representation of the Razaka Zana Seva Sangam, Amalapuram, that the term *Razaka* should be adopted in Government records to indicate the washermen community to the exclusion of all other names. From the replies received from individuals and organisations of members of the community the Government find that there is a diversity of opinion in this matter and opposition to the community being designed as "*Razaka*". The Government have therefore decided that the existing name of the community need not be changed.

Compilation of cost of living index

The question whether, under the present rationing arrangements of mill cloth, the prices of mill cloth or handloom cloth should be recorded for calculating the cost of living index for low paid employees was recently taken up for examination by the Board of Revenue (Civil Supplies). The Board consulted the Provincial Textile Commissioner in the matter and after an examination of the statistics of mill and handloom cloth available for civil consumption he stated that the vast majority of the low paid employees has to depend only on handloom dhoties and sarees on account of the scarcity of mill cloth. He, therefore, recommended that for the compilation of cost of living indices for low paid employees for urban centres, the prices of dhoties and sarees in handloom cloth and of shirting, upper cloth, the petticoat in mill cloth might be adopted. For the compilation of the rural price indices he recommended the adoption of the prices of handloom dhoties and sarees and mill-made upper cloth. The Provincial Textile Commissioner's proposals were approved by the Government and given effect to from the first week of September 1947.

As a result of the adoption of the prices of cloth in the manner indicated above, the cost of living index for most of the urban centres have risen approximately by one to seven points.

Corporation Councillors' Term Extended

Government have issued orders directing that the term of office of the Councillors and aldermen of Corporation of Madras which, at present extends up to 1st November 1947, shall extend instead, up to 1st May 1948.

The decision was arrived at in response to the request of the Corporation Council that the electoral rolls of the Corporation should be revised before the elections are held to the Corporation. The Government have considered the request and have decided to extend the term of office as stated above.

Cinema Operator's Licence

The Government ordered on 5th August 1947 the enhancement of the fees for the Cinema Operator's Licence issued by the Chief Electrical Inspector to the Government from Rs. 4 to Rs. 6. The public are informed that this enhancement will not apply to applications prior to 5th August 1947 which will be charged only at the old rate of Rs. 4.

Collective Subscriptions from Villages

In 1943 the Government laid down that the collective subscriptions from villages with accrued interest would be spent after the war on some beneficial work in or about the villages concerned. The scheme was closed down in February 1946. The total amount of such subscriptions for the entire Province was Rs. 2,34,521 of which Rs. 1,84,851 has been placed at the disposal of the Collectors concerned for utilisation on suitable beneficial works. The Government have also indicated the purposes for which the amounts are to be spent. These include, among others, construction or repair of village schools, sinking or repair of wells, construction or improvement of roads, purchase of radio sets, repair or construction of temples, planting of trees, free distribution of medicine, purchase of books for libraries, erection of lamp posts, construction of culverts, repairs to cart tracks and sinking of bore wells. Collectors have now been instructed to see that the amounts placed at their disposal are spent as early as possible and before the close of the current year on the objects for which are allocated.

Mr. K. Ramunni Menon, I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras.

National Savings

Subscriptions towards National Savings Certificates for the week ended 23rd August 1947 amount to Rs. 4,06,390. Madras stands first with Rs. 1,65,705 and Madura comes next with Rs. 40,970. The entire collections for the period from 1st April to 23rd August 1947 total Rs. 60,39,565.

Indian Pensioners of Macao Police Force

In a Press release dated 28th July 1947 it was pointed out that in future Indian pensioners of the Macao Police Force (Macao is a Portuguese colony in the coast of South China) should produce for inspection there every two months properly certified copies of life certificates with photographs. Since then the Government of India have been informed that as from 1st July 1947, the pensioners of the Macao Government should submit photographs before the expiry of six months, i.e., before 31st December 1947. The photographs should be sent through the Provincial Government to the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, New Delhi, for transmission to Macao.

Public must co-operate to make Prohibition successful

Premier's Spirited Call

The great Tamil Poet Tiruvalluvar in one of the stanzas of his sacred 'Kural' says that drunkards are like the sleeping and the dead in that they lose their consciousness and like the poison drinkers in that they die prematurely.

This brings home to us the fact that all toddy drinkers are in fact drinkers of poison. Toddy instantaneously affects the brain, makes the man lose his senses and indulge in evil mischief. If toddy, which contains 8 per cent of alcohol can work so much havoc it is needless to mention the great evils that are caused by taking brandy, whisky and other liquors which contain 45 per cent of alcohol. Drinking saps the physical energy of man, clouds his senses and degrades him to the level of an animal. The drunkard loses the power of discriminating right from wrong, and under the influence of drink is led on to commit with impunity, murder and theft and other lustful acts. Senseless prattle, filthy language and falsehoods come to him very easily. He has no respect for anybody, and, besides himself becoming physically wrecked, he sadly neglects his family and his other responsibilities. He gets involved in various disputes and finally finds himself hauled before the court. Drink is thus responsible for the ruin of many families. It is to save the countless families being thus ruined, Mahatma Gandhi propagated the creed of Prohibition. The Congress has ever since been preaching this gospel. Our Government have now taken up the responsibility of implementing this scheme of Prohibition, as one of their many schemes for the amelioration of the people.

Loss in Revenue

The excise revenue, at present, in this Province amounts to 17 crores of rupees. The revenue from the ryotwari, zamindari and inam lands amounts only to 10 crores of rupees. The excise revenue comes mostly from the labourers and the poor. The poor thus becomes still poorer having dissipated their meagre earnings, in such evil ways as drink. In 1900 the excise revenue in our Province amounted to Rs. 1 crore and 45 lakhs. Before the Second Great World War the excise revenue of this Province rose up to 5½ crores of rupees. At present the income has increased to 17 crores. Thirty-five lakhs of gallons of liquor are being sold in this Province. This is three times the quantity consumed in the pre-war days. The evil of drink is more rampant in our Province than in the other Provinces of our country. Besides the money actually spent on drink, if the expenses incurred in disputes and quarrels and bickerings, incidental to drink, are taken into consideration it will be realized that 50 crores of rupees are being wasted in this way.

Way to Prosperity

The independence of the country can be cherished and safeguarded only if the citizens realized and discharged them dutifully. Any country that is being eaten away by poverty and disease and where people forgetful of their responsibilities lead a demoralized life can have no moral strength to retain its independence. The introduction of Prohibition involves a loss of 17 crores of rupees for this Government. The Government is nevertheless prepared to bear this loss in the hope that the introduction of Prohibition will help the people to lead a life of peace, happiness and prosperity, thus ultimately enriching the wealth of the country.

Last year complete Prohibition was introduced in 8 districts of our Province. Thereby the Government incurred a loss of 5½ crores of rupees. The Government have decided to enforce Prohibition in 8 more districts with effect from 1st October. This involves an additional loss of Rs. 5 lakhs. In these 8 districts 9½ lakhs of gallons of liquor are being consumed.

Our Duty

The successful working of Prohibition depends on the willing co-operation of all sections of the people such as Government officials, Congressmen and the general public. Public opinion should be mobilized in favour of Prohibition and the social, economic, and moral benefits of Prohibition should be brought home to all. Officials should not regard this merely as a mercenary work but should take it wholeheartedly; proud of being given an opportunity to save the people. It is the duty of the public to advise those who are addicted to drink to give up that evil habit. It is also their duty to give information to the Government about illicit manufacture of liquor. The social consciousness should be roused in order to put down the illicit manufacture of liquor and the consumption thereof. The Government will for this purpose constitute a village committee consisting of three or four of the village officers and that committee will be responsible for successful working of Prohibition in that village. If the committee discharges its duties consciously it will be a sure foundation for the prosperity of the people. The question of levying collective fines on villages where Prohibition offences are committed is under the consideration of the Government. I however expect that there will be no necessity for such punitive action.

The sage Thayumanavar says that those who keep their hands away from murder and theft and are free from drink alone are entitled to be blessed with God's love. Let the Almighty therefore bless the efforts of the officials, the public, the Congress volunteers, M.L.As. and others in this noble task of making man give up the beast in him, and manifest the divinity that is latent in every man.

Deliberations of the Prohibition Conference

Discussion with Representatives of Border States

A meeting of the representatives of the Indian States adjoining Madras Presidency and the Collectors and Prohibition Officers of the 'dry' districts was held on the 13th September 1947 at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George. The Hon'ble Mr. Daniel Thomas, Minister for Prohibition, presided.

The following persons were present :—

Khan Bahadur Kalifullah Sahib Bahadur, Diwan of Pudukkottah; Khan Sahib Syed Imam Sahib, Diwan of Banganapalle; Sri J. Durgappa, Headquarters Assistant to the Excise Commissioner in Mysore, Bangalore; Monsieur H. Norgues, Head of the French Revenue Department, Pondicherry; Sri D. S. Hanumantha Rao, Political Member, Sandur State; Sri G. Narayana Rao, Inspector of Excise, Excise Intelligence Bureau, Mysore; Sri V. N. Kudva, Commissioner of Excise, Board of Revenue, Madras; Mr. Underwood, Inspector-General of Police; Khan Bahadur Munzoor Hussain Sahib Bahadur, Assistant Secretary, Board of Revenue; Rao Sahib M. Rangappa Bangara, Collector of Kurnool; Sri R. Koteswara Rao, Collector of Anantapur; Sri A. Dorairaj, Collector of Guntur; Mr. F. W. A. Morris, Collector of Coimbatore; Mr. J. F. Saunders, Collector of South Kanara; Sri K. N. Anantaraman, Collector of Bellary; Mr. H. C. M. McLaughlin, Collector of Tanjore; Sri Ramavarma Raja, Collector of Madura; Mr. J. C. Griffiths, Collector of Malabar; Sri G. E. Muthirulandi, Personal Assistant to the Collector of Salem; Sri T. N. Krishnamurthi, District Prohibition Officer, Cuddapah; Sri E. Subba Rao, District Prohibition Officer, Kurnool; Sri R. Seshagiri Rao, District Prohibition Officer, Bellary; Sri A. Venugopal Rao, Special Development Officer, Bellary; Rao Sahib S. Nityanandam, Special Development Officer, Coimbatore; Rao Sahib K. Muthu Krishna Naidu, Special Development Officer, Cuddapah; Sri M. Sanjivi Pillai, Special Development Officer, Salem; Sri G. Chandrasekaran, Special Development Officer, Anantapur; Sri P. L. N. Naidu, Principal, Prohibition Training School, Bellary; amd Mr. P. S. Viswanatha Ayyar, Joint Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Problems to be faced

The Hon'ble Mr. Daniel Thomas, in his opening remarks said that during the 1937 Congress Ministry prohibition was introduced in four districts. The Advisers' Government which came into being after the Ministry resigned office in 1939, gave up prohibition after a few years. When the Congress Ministry again came into power in 1946, they re-introduced Prohibition in eight districts. After October 1947 eight more districts went dry, which meant that two-thirds of the Province came under prohibition on that date. It was programmed to make the whole Province completely dry by 1st October 1948.

Proceeding, the Hon'ble Minister said that complete success in a policy like Prohibition might not be possible at present. There were bound to be violations and breaches of the Prohibition Law and Rules just as there were breaches and violations of the ordinary laws of the land. But taking the problem as a whole, if they were able to implement the Prohibition policy with a reasonable measure of effectiveness, there could be no doubt about the resultant economic, social and general uplift of the large percentage of the people of the Province. Drink addicts formed about 10 per cent of the population of Madras. There were three classes among them, namely, (1) those who took toddy, (2) those who went in for arrack, and (3) the so-called higher section who went in for foreign liquors like whisky, gin, etc. So far as he was able to gather from a tour of the Prohibition districts, he could tell them, with some certainty, that most toddy and arrack drinkers had abstained from drinking; at any rate 70 to 80 per cent of them had abstained, either by choice or by compulsion. There were, however, some people who seemed to think that life would be worth nothing if they could not get some drink in some form or other, by some means or other, or in some place or other. Taking advantage of this, some people manufactured arrack clandestinely and supplied it to those men at exorbitant rates. This illicit manufacture of arrack could be prevented only by effective co-operation on the part of the people and the officials.

Border Areas

Coming to the more immediate problem of introducing Prohibition in the districts bordering on the Indian States and French Settlements, the Hon'ble Minister said that this could be done effectively only with the active co-operation of the authorities concerned. On the general desirability of Prohibition, the Province and the States were all agreed. Bombay had adopted a certain plan and Mysore Government had a scheme for gradual restriction of drink and other Provinces also were implementing Prohibition in some way or other. In Cochin State also, some taluks were to go dry in October 1947. But the schedule of dates, and the ways and means adopted for introducing Prohibition differed from place to place. Therefore, it was necessary for this Government to secure the co-operation of the States before they introduced Prohibition in eight more districts to be taken up this year. A five-mile belt area surrounding the boundary of the dry districts was quite necessary for the success of Prohibition. Apart from this, in a belt area of about 10 miles restrictions should be imposed on the number of shops to be kept open, the number of trees to be tapped, etc. This would facilitate to maintain the *status quo* in the adjoining States and prevent any extraordinary demand for drink in those wet areas. There was again the question of illicit importation

of liquor from one territory to the other. All these things could be attended to efficiently if the States and the Government worked in active co-operation with each other.

In conclusion, the Hon'ble Minister invited also the Collectors of Prohibition districts to give their views on the points he had mentioned. He requested the representatives of the States to inform him of the Prohibition measures they had taken in their respective States, the measure of success they achieved, and the extent of the areas where they had introduced Prohibition. All suggestions that would facilitate co-ordinated effort were welcome.

Policy of Mysore Government

The representative from the Mysore State stated that the policy of the State was to introduce Prohibition within a period of five years, by stages. The State had already cut down the supply by 20 per cent this year, and as a consequence, the number of shops which totalled over 3,000, had been reduced by 611. The Mysore Government had already fixed a belt area of 5 miles from the Madras Provincial border and the Mysore officers were frequently exchanging views with the Madras Government officers in the border districts of Kurnool, Bellary, etc., with a view to establish the maximum of co-operation between the two Governments. In the nine taluks of the Mysore State which adjoin South Kanara, Malabar and the Nilgiris, out of the 500 odd shops that existed before, only a few remain working. The Mysore Government would certainly consider whether the number of shops in the border areas could not be cut in a greater degree, within the 20 per cent fixed for the year; but that could be done only from the next year as the shops had already been leased out on 1st July. As regards illicit distillation, they had a special mobile staff for detection purposes, in addition to the usual staff.

Cochin's Stand

The Commissioner of Excise, Cochin, who represented the State said that in Cochin, the Prohibition Act was practically the same as the Madras Act. The State's policy was to introduce Prohibition in stages and they had decided to begin with Chittur taluk. This taluk consisted of two bits, one of which was completely enclosed by Coimbatore and Malabar, and the other was bounded by Malabar on three sides. He thought complete Prohibition could be achieved in four or five years. He did not know what kind of co-operation was expected from his State. The Chairman desired to know if, in case Prohibition was introduced in British Cochin, the State would be prepared to consider the idea of making Mattancheri, the adjoining State territory in the same island, also dry. The representative replied that he would place the proposal before his Government for their decision.

The Collector of Coimbatore said that not many difficulties were experienced in the working of Prohibition in his district. There was a certain amount of transborder visiting of Mysore by addicts from Kollegal. The Travancore border consisted of thick jungle, and there was no such problem there.

The Diwan of Banganapalle State stated that his State also was taking definite steps for restricting the consumption of drinks. Before the war, the consumption in the State was 600 gallons, but after Prohibition was introduced in the Kurnool district, the quantity rose to 2,000 gallons; the State however had recently taken steps to bring it down to 1,000 gallons. As regards belt area, Banganapalle was so small in extent that it would be difficult to give a belt area of 3 miles, but they were considering whether a two-mile belt area could not be created. The State was also trying to cut down the number of shops, and to put down illicit distillation.

The representatives of the Sandur State stated that the excise revenue of the State was Rupees one lakh in 1945–46 before Prohibition was introduced in Bellary and the present revenue was between Rs. $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs and Rs. 2 lakhs; and this figure included revenue from ganja, opium, etc. It was therefore an exaggeration to say as had been said by some persons, that the revenue of the State had gone up by leaps and bounds as a result of Prohibition in Bellary district. The factors contributing to an increase in the revenue were the re-opening of the manganese factory, the large number of labourers employed by the tobacco factory and the change over on the part of some drinkers from toddy to arrack because of the stoppage of import of toddy from Kudligi taluk. The State authorities themselves wanted to introduce Prohibition in the State; he had already assured the Collector of Bellary and he gave the assurance once again to the Madras Government now, that the ruler would co-operate to the utmost extent possible in seeing that Prohibition in Bellary was made a success. Before Prohibition was introduced in Bellary the quantity of toddy imported into Sandur from Kudligi taluk of Bellary was 1,500 gallons and there was no manufacture of arrack in the State. Three hundred and twenty gallons of arrack were being supplied to the State by the distillery at Bellary from the year 1907. In 1945–46 the State authorities requested the Government of Madras to increase the quantity to 600 gallons and this was done. And after the introduction of Prohibition in Bellary the quantity had gone up to 900 gallons; but, as he said, the reason for the increase was to be found in the re-opening of the manganese factory and the employment of coolies by the tobacco factory. To a question from the Chairman whether the State could not bring down the quantity to the original level of 320 gallons, the representative said that as the question depended more on the ways and means of making up the consequent loss of revenue he would place the matter before the State authorities for consideration.

Mr. K. N. Anantaraman, Collector of Bellary, pointed out that as regards the Sandur State, the increase had been from 320 gallons of arrack to 1,050 gallons. Something must be done to bring the figure down. He understood that the Hyderabad State proposed to have a belt area of 3 miles. In his opinion, at least a five-mile belt area was necessary if Prohibition was to be effective.

Position in Pudukottah

The Diwan of Pudukottah remarked that if the conference had been convened some six months ago, the State would have been better able to see that Prohibition in the border districts was a success; but as it was now late in the year, nothing much could be done as regards the location of shops in the border areas. The Pudukottah State had in fact for the past few years been controlling arrack, and would give the assurance that the quantity would be kept at the same level. As regards toddy, he had no objection to limit the number of trees and also to shift the border shops beyond a three-mile belt area. As regards the policy, however, he regretted he could not agree to complete Prohibition. His State had an idea of limiting drink to the people who were drinking at present, avoiding issue to women and children and also of limiting the quantity, by adopting system of rationing. That, he thought, would be a

more effective method of achieving prohibition in a period of, say, fifteen years, which was not a long period in the history of a nation. On the whole he was ready to co-operate with the Madras Government to the maximum extent possible.

French India's Support

The representative from French India whose speech was translated by an interpreter said that there was a proposal to cut down drink by 50 per cent coming up for consideration before the French India Assembly at Pondicherry on the next Monday (15th). He requested the Madras Government to address his Government officially and also to depute some officer there to explain the Madras proposals, so that the Assembly might consider the subject and come to a decision. To a question from the Chairman whether it would not be better to make Karaikal totally dry when prohibition was introduced in Tanjore, and also make Mahe dry when Malabar was to have prohibition, and to make up by a smaller cut in Pondicherry itself, the representative replied that those were questions to be examined by the Assembly which was commencing its session on 15th September 1947. He requested that a representative of the Madras Government be deputed for explaining these proposals to the Assembly after due intimation of the date of his coming.

Collectors explain conditions

The Collector of Malabar, Mr. Griffiths, was of the view that unless the Cochin State co-operated fully, it would be practically impossible to enforce prohibition in British Cochin. He also thought that the belt area should be at least five miles. He also stated that the shops in Mahe had already been sold for the current lease.

The Collector of South Kanara, Mr. Saunders, said his problem was mainly one of illicit distillation and illicit tapping. The district was full of jungles and enforcement was no easy matter.

The Collector of the Nilgiris, Mr. T. S. Ramachandran, made the following suggestions, viz., (1) that arrack should be completely abolished in all the Tamil districts including South Arcot, Ramnad and Tinnevelly; (2) that an alternative use for arrack should be found by using it for manufacture of power alcohol; (3) that in the matter of prohibition, as was suggested by Mahatma Gandhi in regard to cow-slaughter the Madras Government should proceed more by way of persuasion and education; (4) that in the prohibition and non-prohibition districts, a prohibition pledge should be taken by all officers and that in every weekly shandy, people should be asked to take or renew the pledge, and by collecting statistics of the number of people who so take the pledge, adopt the method of gradually reducing the quantity of liquor and the number of shops, in proportion to the number of those who had not taken the pledge; and (5) lastly, to find out alternative uses for the toddy. He was told that it had good fertilizer value.

Sri R. Bangara, Collector of Kurnool, could not understand why, when the Hyderabad State was willing to give a five-mile belt area (as he understood from the Commissioner of Hyderabad) the Madras Government were asking only for a three-mile belt area.

As regards Banganapalle State he stated that the distillery which was formerly at Tadpatri had now gone over to Banganapalle; and that the quantity also had gone up from 600 gallons to 3,000 gallons. He also suggested that the Sub-Inspector whose services had been lent to the State might be given power to have some control over the distillery in the State.

The Diwan of Banganapalle promised that the points raised by the speaker would be duly examined by the State authorities.

Rao Sahib K. Rama Varma Raja, Collector of Madura, pointed out that within the belt area of five miles from Madura border, there were four or five shops in the Travancore side. Those shops should be removed to the interior. Hon'ble Minister observed that the Travancore Durbar should be addressed, after a list of the shops was obtained from the Collector of Madura.

The Collector of Tanjore, Mr. McLaughlin, said that of all the Prohibition districts, Tanjore was likely to give the biggest headache. There was the Pudukottah State and also Karaikal; and there was also the smuggling from Ceylon. He knew that at present there was an international smuggling gang whose activities had been going on for some years, who were handling opium, cocaine, etc., between Tanjore and Ceylon, and taking rice from Tanjore. He understood the smugglers had a regular intelligence service too. They had half a dozen motor launches and a good staff; and they also seemed to hold a licence from the Ceylon Government. Unless something was done to tackle the question, he was afraid prohibition in Tanjore could not be made a success. Mr. Saunders agreed with Mr. McLaughlin and said that the Government of India had been addressed to provide coastal patrol launches. Mr. Underwood, Inspector-General of Police, said that these launches to be effective should be based on Mandapam and not on Madras. The Government of India could be addressed.

Sri Dorairaj, Collector of Guntur, pointed out that so far as his district was concerned, there was likely to be smuggling of liquor by ferries from Hyderabad, across the Kistna river. The Collector of Cuddapah, Mr. R. S. Malayappan, said his problem was a purely internal one.

Encouraging Response

The Chairman, in winding up the proceedings, said that he was greatly encouraged by the deliberations of the Conference; public opinion was an uncertain factor; it varied with persons and places. There had been a good deal of criticism recently of the Madras Government's prohibition policy, especially with regard to the eight districts in which it had been originally introduced, that it had not been a complete success. As he had already said, there was no question of a cent per cent success for this measure. A certain leakage was inevitable, due to local conditions and human nature. Even allowing for such reasonable leakages, the question was whether there had been sufficient progress in implementing prohibition.

One great difficulty experienced in the course of the administration of prohibition was the contiguity of 'wet' areas in Indian States and the importation of illicit liquor from those areas into the Madras dry districts. There was a proposal to tighten the Act by providing that people who go from dry to wet areas and come back drunk should be penalized. While he agreed there would be difficulty in working such a provision he thought it was a necessary provision, if prohibition was to be made more effective in the present dry areas.

In his opinion, the next important thing was to get greater co-operation from the Indian States. It was practically unanimously agreed that prohibition as a policy was a sound and wholesome one, and it was also agreed,

he thought, tha there would be difficulties in its practical working. The success of the measure therefore depended a good deal on public co-operation and also the co-operation of the different state and provincial authorities.

India—One and indivisible

One of the important results of this Conference was that they had begun to understand each other. The Madras officials had placed their difficulties before the State representatives and the State representatives had given assurances of co-operation and support in the carrying out of our policy. After all, India was one and indivisible and when we were all working for the common good of the country, it was necessary that we should stand shoulder to shoulder in implementing any policy for the good of the people. They had all come to some understanding by which he hoped prohibition could be enforced more effectively in the future than in the past. When therefore this Government introduced prohibition in eight more districts from the 1st October 1947, he was sure there would be less of difficulties encountered and more of smooth working of prohibition.

He was glad that the Collectors of some of the districts had attended the Conference and heard the assurances given by the States representatives. He was also glad that the French India representative had come and given the assurance that the French India Assembly would co-operate with us in enforcing prohibition in the border districts. He therefore earnestly hoped that in the period 1st October 1947 to 30th September 1948, some of the difficulties experienced in the past would be surmounted and there would be greater and greater co-operation between the officials and authorities concerned. Thus they would be able to move onward and achieve a greater amount of happiness and well-being of a larger and larger number of fellow beings.

After the Chairman had once again expressed his gratefulness to those who had attended the Conference, the conference terminated.

Working of Prohibition

Report for the month of July 1947

The following report on the working of the Prohibition Act in the districts of Anantapur, Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah, Salem, Coimbatore, Chittoor and North Arcot during July 1947 is published for information.

Enforcement

Cases detected.—The total number of cases detected in the districts during the month was 2,256 as against 2,192 in June, 2,132 in May and 2,059 in April.

The total number of illicit distillation cases was 1,015 as against 905 in June. There was, however, a marked decrease in North Arcot district from 288 to 174, due partly to the rounding up of several gangs of distillers as a result of vigorous drives organized during the two previous months.

The number of cases of illicit tapping detected decreased from 36 to 7. A large number of cases of smuggling of arrack from Hyderabad and Banganapalle States was reported, the total number of cases of smuggling of liquor being 80 as against 57 detected during the previous month. The number of cases relating to intoxicating drugs showed a slight increase from 168 to 169. The Railway Police of Bellary junction reported two cases of smuggling of ganja from Bombay Province involving 162 tolas. Of the 33 cases reported from Anantapur district the quantities involved in eight cases were large, ranging from 80 tolas to 230 tolas.

Border problems.—Border petrols continued to be active. A large number of addicts in Prohibition districts visited border shops for drink. Smuggling of liquor from Banganapalle, Sandur and Hyderabad continued. No case of smuggling of liquor from Mysore State was reported during the month though there were cases of smuggling of ganja. Cases of smuggling of liquor from Cochin State to Coimbatore district were also reported during the month.

Assistance by officials of other departments and by non-officials.—As usual the Police in the Ceded districts gave very satisfactory co-operation in the detection of crime. The work done by the village officers continued to be good in North Arcot district. In Chittoor district also they did good work. There was a slight improvement in the work done by Taluk and Village Prohibition Committees during the month.

General.—The preventive work during the month was on the whole satisfactory.

Ameliorative Work

Substitute for drink.—There was a further increase in the number of tea and coffee stalls except in Kurnool and Cuddapah districts. They were well attended by ex-addicts who seemed to have reconciled themselves to changed conditions and taken to non-alcoholic drinks.

Rural recreation.—The forty-four Rural Recreation Officers who were working during the month visited 796 villages and organized rural games in 777 of them. Firka tournaments were held in 20 villages and Taluk tournaments in 10 villages.

Bhajanas, Harikathas or kalakshepams.—Bhajanas, Harikathas or kalashepams were held in 1,700 villages during the month. In 345 villages, folk-dances, dramas or cinemas were held at the instance of the Development staff. The grant of subsidies by Government to deserving dramatic troupes to provide entertainment to the public has infused enthusiasm in the villages and a large number of amateur troupes has been formed especially in the districts of Chittoor and Anantapur.

Ballad singers.—The thirty ballad singers who were working during the month visited 402 villages, organized community songs in 166 of these villages and trained more than 1,000 villagers in community songs.

Propaganda vans.—The vans in the Prohibition districts visited 163 villages. They were also used by the Indian Women's Civic Corps for doing propaganda among women in places where there are branches of the Corps.

Grama sanghams.—Six thousand eight hundred and thirty-six Grama sanghams have been organized. They engaged themselves in various ameliorative measures. The Village Betterment Committee at Kristipadu in th

Mahatma Gandhiji's Blessings for Prohibition

The Hon'ble Mr. Daniel Thomas, Minister of Prohibition writes :—

I requested Mahatmaji to give us a message on the occasion of the extension of Prohibition to eight more districts in this province. Mahatmaji has been pleased to send me the following message. Owing to delay in postal transmission, I received this letter on the 8th October, just two days back.

24-9-47
New Delhi

Dear Daniel,

Of course it is good you are making eight more districts dry. There can be no rest until the whole province is dry. Are you following up the law by doing the constructive & educative work I pointed out the other day in the columns of Harijan?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

Sri Daniel Thomas
Minister for Education
Fort St George

MADRAS

Anantapur district collected Rs. 400 for installing a public radio on Independence Day. In the North Arcot district, the Pullur Grama Sangham opened an Elementary School after constructing a building at a cost of about Rs. 500 and the Kilkodungalur Sangham raised Rs. 1,000 for constructing a village library. In the Coimbatore district the Guthialathur Sangham collected Rs. 1,200 for opening a dispensary and three other Sanghams collected donations amounting to Rs. 6,000, Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 1,500 for putting up buildings for schools in their villages.

Promotion of thrift.—The amount saved in hundi boxes during the month was Rs. 17,113 in all the districts except North Arcot, figure for which are not available. The Hon'ble Minister for Prohibition launched the thrift campaign in two co-operative societies during his visit to the Anantapur district.

Uplift of women.—The instructress and other workers of the Indian Women's Civic Corps in the Salem town carried on ameliorative work in 18 villages. The branch at Arkonam and the Development Staff in the North Arcot district carried on propaganda work among the womenfolk of ex-addicts suggesting how to make the homes pleasant and happy to the men when they return after the day's toil.

Co-operative jaggery manufacturing societies.—In the districts of Salem, Chittoor, Coimbatore and North Arcot 188 co-operative societies have been formed and 17,689 licences issued. The value of jaggery produced up to the end of July was 13·17 lakhs.

Beneficial results of prohibition.—The reports received from the Collectors and Special Development Officers reveal that the ex-addicts have improved their economic condition by solving a part of their income and purchasing utility articles. The womenfolk of ex-addicts and their children are particularly happy. A calm and peaceful atmosphere prevails in the villages with the disappearance of street-brawls and domestic quarrels. In short, prohibition is having a salutary effect on the general, social and economic life of the entire community.

Counter-attractions to Drink

Ameliorative activities of the Government Explained

(*By* V. N. KUDVA, ESQ., I.C.S., Commissioner of Irrigation, Excise and Prohibition, Madras.)

1st October 1947 will be a red letter day for the districts of Guntur, Nellore, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Malabar, South Kanara and the Nilgiris. From this day onwards Government have prohibited all alcoholic drinks in these districts as they did in last October in the districts of Coimbatore, Salem, North Arcot, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Bellary.

Though drink has been recognized all over the world as a social evil and is condemned by all religious and by all classes of people, it has somehow taken a strong root for years past in all countries and among all classes of people. It has been estimated that in India nearly 10 per cent of the population are addicted to drink. There can be no doubt that this evil is the cause for unhappiness in many homes especially among the poorer classes and is eating into the very vitals of the people. The eradication of this evil from society is therefore a very important step in the programme of uplift of the masses from several points of view, moral, social and economic. India has achieved political independence. She has now to fight for her economic independence, i.e., to make her people free from want and to raise the standard of their living. What India wants to-day is better manhood and better womanhood. The prohibition of the evil of drink is a necessary step towards the attainment of this goal.

The enforcement of prohibition involves the changing of the habits of a large section of the people. For the success of this reform, propaganda and ameliorative work among the ex-addicts are as important as the prevention of offences and the punishment of offenders under the Prohibition Law. With a view to make the change over as easy as possible, Government have introduced various ameliorative measures alongside the enforcement of prohibition by employing special staff for the purpose. There are in each of the 8 prohibition districts, one Special Development Officer and Assistant Development Officers at the rate of one for each revenue division, besides Rural Recreation Officers and village guides at the rate of one each for every taluk and ballad singers at the rate of one for each revenue division. Government have also sanctioned staff on the same basis for the 8 districts in which prohibition is to be extended in October 1947. The Special Development Officers who are recruited from Deputy Registrars of Co-operative Societies assist the Collectors in the ameliorative activities.

The broad lines on which ameliorative work is carried on in the prohibition districts are indicated below.

Provision of substitutes for drink

To most drinkers the toddy shop or the arrack tavern is a place of resort in the evening and a means of escape from the tedium of life after a day's hard toil. Lest the abrupt closure of these shops should deny the drinkers this means of escape, arrangements are made by Government to provide substitute drinks to the addicts in or near the places where toddy shops were working prior to the introduction of prohibition. These refereshment stalls are proposed to be set up in about one half of the total number of toddy shops in the districts for about three months to provide the ex-addicts with suitable substitute drinks like tea, buttermilk, *panagam* as well as eatables. Actually 1,478 stalls were opened last year in the 8 prohibition districts. The drinks were provided free of cost in the initial stages and at concessional rates later on. Government sanctioned a subsidy of Rs. 100 for each stall and this was supplemented by donations raised locally. As was anticipated, private stalls have been coming into being at several of these places where the Government stalls functioned. In view of the utility of these stalls, Government have sanctioned the proposal to open 1,900 refreshment stalls in the new 8 districts on the introduction of prohibition in them in October 1947. Arrangements are under way for the establishment of these stalls.

Counter-attractions

The most effective counter-attractions to drink are rural sports and games,

folk dances, kathaprasanghams, kalakshepams, harikathas and village dramas. Entertain ments of various kinds have been organized to divert the minds of the ex-addicts. The most popular games such as Chadu-gudu, pillayar-pandu, killi-thattu, tug-of-war, etc., and bhajanas, harikathas, street dramas, folk dances and dramas by professionals and amateurs are encouraged. For this purpose, Government have sanctioned one Rural Recreation Officer for each taluk and persons specially trained in rural games and rural uplift work in the Y.M.C.A. College of Physical Education are appointed to these posts. The Rural Recreation Officers assisted by Village Guides (one for each taluk) organize rural recreation clubs, teach various games to the villagers, arrange for tournaments and create popular interest in these activities. The organization of rural recreation serves not only to provide relaxation to the former addicts but prepares the ground for a greater rural uplift drive. The ballad singers appointed at the rate of one for every revenue division, provide entertainment to the people, teach community songs to the villagers, coach the amateurs in street dramas wherever facilities exist and generally organize counter-attractions to drink. These ballad singers are provided by Government with musical instruments at a cost not exceeding Rs. 100 for each singer. With a view to encourage local talents in preference to professionals from outside, in the matter of providing entertainment to the villagers in the prohibition districts, Government have sanctioned subsidies for dramatic troupes in prohibition districts. Folk dances, street dramas, boys scouts' displays, magic lantern shows, etc., are some of the other forms of entertainments provided as alternative attractions to drink. Government have also provided each district with a propaganda van equipped with a cinema outfit and public address system. These vans are provided with gramophone records and films and they are useful not only for propaganda but also for providing effective counter-attractions to drink.

One other effective counter-attraction to drink is the community radio receiving set. Local boards and private bodies in the prohibition districts have been exhorted to instal radios under the Government of India Scheme. But as the number of radio sets available under the scheme is very limited, a proposal is under consideration according to which gramasanghams, local boards and others would collect and contribute the capital cost of the installation of community radio receivers, the maintenance charges of these sets for one year being borne by Government.

Promotion of thrift

Prohibition is but a means to an end, namely, the uplift of the villagers. Part of the money formerly squandered on drinks will be available to the ex-addicts for expenditure on necessities of life, viz., food and clothing. Still they will be left with a balance which can be saved for a future contingency. A thrift campaign through home-safes and hundi boxes has, therefore, been launched in the prohibition districts through co-operative societies. Villagers including ex-addicts are encouraged to lay by their savings. Thrift days are celebrated by the co-operative societies selected for introducing the scheme of savings. The total amount of savings effected up to the end of June 1947 through hundi boxes in the existing 8 prohibition districts is Rs. 95,605. Savings under the National Savings Scheme are also encouraged by the ameliorative staff. Similar thrift campaign through co-operative societies will be launched in the new prohibition districts.

Formation of Gramasanghams

As the ultimate object of prohibition is to promote the well-being of the poorer classes, full use is made of the opportunity for organizing rural uplift work. Village Betterment Committees or gramasanghams are formed in villages to promote rural uplift activities. Paid officials are associated with these committees. The gramasanghams organize rural recreation and village uplift activities like thrift, village sanitation, street cleaning and lighting, village communications, introduction of better seeds, manure, encouragement of cattle breeding, poultry farming, fostering of cottage industries, etc. There were on 30th June 1947 more than 6,500 gramasanghams in the 8 prohibition districts. The ameliorative staff organize and guide the gramasanghams in these activities. The sanghams constitute a sort of community organization for maintaining a general uplift drive in the villages.

Rural uplift schools

To train young men in the methods of promoting rural welfare and to acquaint them with the facilities offered by the various Government departments for this purpose, rural uplift schools are conducted in select centres one for each quarter in the prohibition districts. About 50 young men with an aptitude for rural work are trained in the schools for a month. Government have sanctioned a grant of Rs. 1,000 for each school for this purpose and this includes stipends to the students at Rs. 12 each. At these schools, training is imparted to the students in rural games, and other recreational activities as also in rural uplift work. The instruction on rural uplift is imparted by the officers of the various nation building departments of Government. The students going out of these schools are expected to be useful village guides establishing liaison between the villages on the one hand and officers of Government on the other. The best of the students are appointed as wholetime village guides as part of the ameliorative staff. These schools will be conducted in the new districts also.

Co-operative societies for ex-addicts

As the ultimate object of the introduction of prohibition is to improve the economic condition of the people, steps are being taken to augment their income by the formation of co-operative societies for the pursuit of cottage industries. For example, at Rajampet in Cuddapah district, a co-operative society for leather goods manufacture has been organized and started for the chucklers. At Bojjayapalli, in the same district the cartmakers have been organized into a co-operative society for the manufacture and sale of country carts. Government have given financial assistance to these two societies. There is a proposal to form a basket makers' co-operative society at Vellore in North Arcot district. It is hoped that a net-work of such societies will be formed in all the prohibition districts before long.

Employment of toddy tappers

Government have taken steps to absorb the tappers thrown out of employment consequent on the introduction of prohibition in alternative occupations. So far as the existing 8 districts are concerned, the total number of ex-tappers thrown out of employment was about 21,000 and the tappers have generally adjusted themselves to the changed conditions either by emigrating to the neighbouring wet districts or States or by seeking employment in agricultural and other work. In the districts of Coimbatore, Salem, North Arcot and Chittoor Government have permitted the tapping of sweet juice from palmyra trees for the production of jaggery and co-operative societies have been formed for

the purpose. There were on 30th June 1947, 185 societies and 17,666 licences had been issued to the tappers. The societies handled 186,204 maunds of jaggery valued at Rs. 13·12 lakhs. Government have sanctioned Senior Inspectors of Co-operative Societies for the supervision of these societies.

Separate cottage industries societies for the benefit of the tappers have also been formed at certain centres. At Ayothianpatnam in Salem district, a carpet weavers' co-operative society has been organized and started on its work. At Ambur in North Arcot district, a co-operative milk-supply union with a half-a-dozen feeder societies in and around Ambur have been organized. Government have provided financial assistance to these two societies in the shape of free grants and loans and have also sanctioned a Senior Inspector free of cost for attending to their work. Proposals for settling some of the tappers in land colonies are also under consideration. Similar steps will be taken in the new districts. The tappers can be absorbed in agriculture, jaggery manufacture and the suitable cottage industries.

'Prohibition' Drama

The Madras Secretariat Party staged "Manodhidam" in Tamil on the night of the 20th ultimo at the Sri Gopalakrishna Talkies, Madura, under the presidency of Sri Rao Sahib K. Rama Varma Raja, Collector of Madura. The play depicts vividly the evils of drink and how change over to total abstinence is possible by a sense of determination on the part of the public to give up this evil habit. The value of propaganda among the people in order to make prohibition a success is emphasized. The play was attended by a large gathering of the public in Madura town and from the mufassal and was appreciated. At the end, the Collector and Sri Rao Sahib A. Palaniappa Mudaliyar, Deputy Commissioner of Prohibition, thanked the Madras Secretariat Party for having given the performance in aid of the District Prohibition and Amelioration Fund.

19 OCT 1947 MADRAS

Genesis of the Present Food Crisis

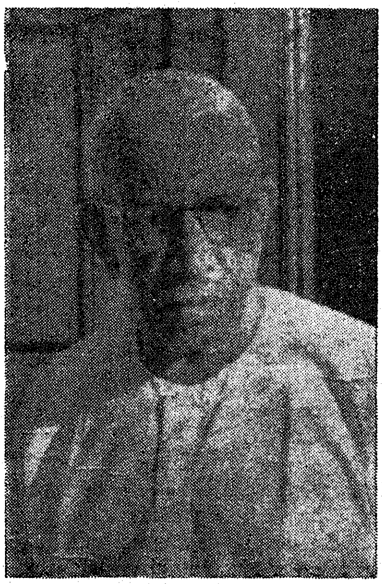
Dr. Rajan's statement in Madras Legislature

The Hon'ble Dr. Rajan in this statement sums up the causes, provincial, national as well as international, which have led to the present food crisis. It will be seen from this statement that forces have been at work which were, and are, beyond the control of the Provincial Government. Added to all this is the fact that in certain areas public co-operation has not been forthcoming in as abundant a measure as the Government had a right to expect in a grave situation. However, there is no need to be desperate. In the past few weeks procurement has somewhat improved, and if the improvement could be maintained we should be able to pull through.

At the end of May 1946, in moving that the food and the cloth situation be taken into consideration, the Hon'ble Sri Prakasam gave a detailed review of the food position of the province and the steps taken since 1942–43 by the Government to handle the problem. It is therefore unnecessary for me to cover the same ground again now. I propose therefore to place before you only a few salient facts which will show how our food resources have been steadily dwindling leading to the present crisis.

Always Deficit

2. The Madras Province has been even in normal times deficit in foodgrains and has been dependent largely on imports from Burma and other eastern countries to make up its deficits. The net average annual imports were about 451,000 tons of rice and 10,000 tons of millets. The average annual production of the four pre-war fasli years 1935–36 to 1938–39 was about 4·6 million tons of rice and 2·9 million tons of millets. The average annual imports for the same period were 381,000 tons of rice, 12,000 tons of millets and 64,000 tons of wheat and wheat products. Deducting seed requirements, the



quantity of cereal foodgrains available for consumption annually amounted to about 7·7 million tons.

War Years

3. 1939–40 to 1944–45 were the war years. During the first three years of the war this province was not seriously affected and there was no food problem as such. There was, of course, a rise in the price of foodgrains; but the rise was not very great and foodgrains were available to consumers at reasonable prices. The fall of Burma towards the end of 1941 deprived not only Madras but also other parts of South India (Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin) as also Ceylon of the usual source of imports. In the first half of 1942, these areas bought in Madras to the extent of about 155,000 tons of rice for their immediate needs. Thus, Madras for the first time became a net exporter of rice though as I have said above it has always been deficit in rice and a net importer. The assistance to the adjoining areas was continued in 1942–43 also; the net exports during that year amounted to about 262,000 tons. Towards the end of the year, the Government of India took over the control of the distribution of foodgrains from surplus to deficit areas under their Basic Plans and Madras was relieved of the demands from her neighbours. In 1943–44 and 1944–45, the Government of India gave some assistance to our province. The net imports of rice in 1943–44 were 56,000 tons and in 1944–45 about 130,000 tons. These quantities do not compare with the normal pre-war annual import of

451,000 tons; but were no doubt of great help. The Grow More Food Campaign showed an increase of area under foodcrops and a reduction in the area under non-foodcrops. But the effects of the campaign were neutralized by the bad seasons and there was no substantial addition to the food resources of the province. The position of the province in the last three years of the war was as follows :—

Name of the foodgrains.	Average annual production. TONS.	Net imports. TONS.	Quantity available for consumption deducting seed. TONS.
Rice	4,866,667	(a) (—) 76,713	4,632,362
Milets	2,652,000	22,666	2,616,896
Wheat and wheat products ..	1,730	60,436	62,033
	7,520,397	6,389	7,311,291

(a) Net exports as explained above.

It will be noticed from the above that the average quantity available for consumption in the last three years of the war decreased to 7·3 million tons from about 7·7 million tons pre-war. This was partly due to the prevalence of famine in the ceded districts which affected the millet yield but chiefly due to the decline in imports. It must be remembered that all this while the population has gone on increasing at the rate of one per cent or nearly five lakhs of persons per year. But no scarcity was actually felt as the normal carry-over was being used up.

First post-war year—Inauspicious beginning

4. We thus began the first post-war year 1945-46 under very difficult conditions. I must explain that the year referred to here and in what follows is the kharif year commencing on the first November. This has been adopted because the Government of India adopt the kharif year for their distribution plans of rice and millets to suit the all-India conditions. We had practically exhausted all our reserves and had to rely entirely on current production supplemented by imports for current consumption. Both the monsoons were in defect and the cyclone did great damage to the crops ripe for harvest in parts of the Circars. The estimated production of rice was 5,241,000 tons against the average of 4,866,667 tons for the previous three years and 2,127,000 tons of millets against the average of 2,652,000 tons for the same period. The year was a bad year for rice and millets all over India, particularly South India. A famine was apprehended and plans were made to mitigate its effects.

5. Though the war had ended, normal imports could not be resumed, for the countries used to export rice to India were devastated by war and conditions all over were very unsettled and sufficient shipping was not available. Besides there were many other countries which had suffered during the war and were claimants for such surplus rice as was available. The Allies set up a body called the I.E.F.C. (International Emergency Food Council) at Washington to pool the available resources and distribute them equitably. The Government of India had to convince this body of the justness of the claim of India and as several political and economic considerations swayed the decisions, the assistance given fell short of India's requirements. In any case, there was not enough rice to go round and the Government of India had to accept wheat, maize, barley and such other foodgrains, which are not in ordinary use in South India, to make up the quota. From out of the imports and from what could be secured from other parts of India, the Government of India supplied 603,000 tons of foodgrains made up of 268,612 tons of rice, 184,631 tons of wheat and wheat products, 149,757 tons of millets, maize and other unfamiliar grains.

Reduction of rations to 12 oz.

6. At a conference held at Bangalore in February 1946, presided over by His Excellency the Viceroy, it was agreed that, whatever assistance might be forthcoming from abroad, the country should husband its resources carefully, and the decision was taken that the over-all ration in all rationed areas in the country should be reduced to 12 ounces. Immediate effect was given to this decision in this province. The province had naturally to make the best use of its own resources before it could convince the Government of India of its needs and obtain the required help. Statutory rationing and monopoly procurement were already in force in the district of Malabar from 1944. Rural rationing and the system of procuring the entire surplus with the producers on Government account which were in force in six other deficit districts were extended to all the remaining districts in the province, including the surplus areas.

Fixation of prices

7. It has been the practice to fix the prices of rice and millets at the commencement of each kharif year and keep them unchanged during the year. The prices prevailing at the end of 1944–45 were left unchanged for 1945–46 as it was expected that the season would be normal and that the wages for labour would go down consequent on the closure of military works at the end of the war. Neither of these expectations turned out to be correct and it became necessary to encourage the cultivation of short-term crops and to stimulate procurement by means of bonuses. A bonus at the rate of Rs. 15 per acre was offered for the area brought under foodcrops in March and April 1946. A bonus at the rate of Re. 1 per maund of paddy and 12 annas and 8 annas per maund of major and minor millets respectively were given for deliveries made during the 1st June and 15th August 1946. Another bonus of Re. 1 per maund of paddy and 8 annas per maund of millets was given for the short-term crops delivered in the months of September to November 1946. An additional bonus of Re. 1 per maund of paddy was given for paddy delivered between 16th September and 31st October 1946, the most critical period. These inducements produced the desired effect and procurement was very successful. Against a target of 1,402,500 tons of rice, the quantity procured amounted to 1,354,766 tons. The millets procured amounted to 120,887 tons against the target of 409,000 tons. Incidentally I may add that these inducements were too successful in that they brought out whatever resources that remained and emptied the granaries. The quantities of rice procured and the rice imported were not however enough to maintain the 12 oz. ration. The ration of the rice-eaters was first reduced to 10 oz. of rice and 2 oz. of other foodgrains, and then in August 1946 to 8 oz. of rice and 4 oz. of other foodgrains. Besides foodgrains, foodstuffs like dehydrated potatoes, sweet potatoes, groundnut, toffee and milk powder were imported and sold at subsidized rates. The crisis was tided over, but it cost the Government on the relief measures taken about ten crores of rupees.

Popular Committees and Co-operative Schemes

8. I must also refer to two new institutions set up during the year as

they have a bearing on the food situation during the current year. With a view to associate the non-officials with the food administration and to obviate complaints of high-handedness on the part of food officials, Village, Taluk and District Food Committees were formed. In regard to procurement, they were authorized to scrutinize the demand lists prepared by the officials and settle the quantities to be collected from individual producers and from each village. As you are fairly familiar with the functions and duties of these committees, it is unnecessary for me to go into greater details. The second institution set up was the Producer-*cum*-Consumers' Societies with the aim of eliminating middlemen and blackmarkets and securing the largest benefits to the producers and consumers alike. The scheme was first tried in the district of Malabar where it worked with a fair amount of success. It was then extended to the delta taluks of East and West Godavari, Kistna and Guntur districts, and the societies were in the course of organization at the end of the calendar year 1946.

9. The year 1946–47 started well. The rainfall in the two monsoons was adequate and there would have been a normal and even a bumper crop but for the heavy rain in December and January. The yield of paddy was in consequence reduced in some districts and millets were affected in several districts. Taking due account of this damage, the yield of rice has been estimated at 4,795,000 tons, that is, 554,000 tons more than the yield in the previous year, and of millets at 2,114,000 tons, about 13,000 tons less than in the previous year. As the prospects thus seemed more favourable, and in the belief that the Government of India would be able to continue their help to the extent required, the rice portion of the ration of rice-eaters was raised to 10 oz. from the midlde of December, and the decision was being given effect to in the districts as stocks were built up. In December, it became known that the Government of India would not be in a position to supply any wheat or wheat products or maize to this Province for some time to come and there was no other grain that could be given for the balance of 2 oz. to make up the 12 oz. In January it was therefore decided to raise the rice content of the ration to the full 12 oz. But this order could not be introduced in some districts or kept in force for long in other districts as procurement was not proceeding according to expectations and in view of the subsequent intimations that the help the Government of India could render was problematical.

Procurement Slows Down

10. As usual the question of fixing prices for 1946–47 was considered in September 1946 and the recommendation of an *ad hoc* committee that the price of paddy should be raised by a rupee a maund was sent up to the Government of India for approval. The arguments that the prices of foodgrains in Madras were the lowest in India and that the prices had not been allowed to rise to the same extent as in other parts of India were not disputed. But the Government of India decided against any increase in any Province as a matter of all-India policy. They were also against the grant of any bonus either, as it was considered to be a way of getting round the decision against price enhancement. There was great disappointment among producers who considered that they did not have a fair deal since nothing was being done to check the rising costs of cultivation, or the soaring prices of consumers' goods. The grant of the bonuses in the previous year had roused expectations which were rudely quenched by this decision. Procurement did not in the circumstances make a good start and gather momentum as usual. Producers in general refused to give up all hopes of either price increase or bonus later in the year despite frequent denials by the Government and were slow in making deliveries.

11. There were other causes too that retarded procurement. The Village Committees in general showed themselves incapable of considering the needs of areas outside their own villages and invariably underestimated the surpluses for procurement. They increased the strain on rice by freely reclassifying millet-eaters, as rice-eaters whenever there was the slightest difficulty in supplying millets. There was a general failure of millets in the upland areas of the Circar districts and rice was smuggled to those areas and sold at very high prices. People in those areas could afford to pay heavy prices as they were making large sums of money by raising industrial crops like tobacco. It is not possible to say how much rice was lost for Government procurement in this way, but there is no doubt that it was considerable. This black-market is reported to continue to flourish in spite of official vigilance for want of public support. Last, but not the least, the newly formed Producers-*cum*-Consumers Societies in the Circars were not pulling their weight in procurement as they were new to the business, and were in the throes of organization battling with the vested interests which they were intended to supplant. As the following figures show, procurement by the societies in the districts of East and West Godavari was not bad, it was unsatisfactory in Kistna and most disappointing in Guntur :—

PROCUREMENT FROM JANUARY TO MARCH.
(Figures in tons.)

	January to March 1945–46.	January to March 1946–47,		
		By millers.	By societies.	Total.
East Godavari	15,605	16,790	11,501	28,291
West Godavari	83,939	20,620	30,421	51,041
Kistna	52,004	46,400	9,410	55,810*
Guntur	57,619	10,807	4,060	14,867

This would not have mattered if the deficit districts could have afforded to wait but they were working with very low stocks and were in need of replenishment.

India Government's Warning

12. The Government of India had their own difficulties. The millet crop in other parts of India was below normal. The wheat crop over a large part of Central India extending from Hyderabad almost to the foot of the Himalayas was affected by rust and the yield was negligible. The allotment of rice to India for the first half of 1947 was about 400,000 tons and 200,000 tons for the second half of the year. But as the chief source of supply is Burma where conditions are unsettled, receipts were uncertain; only a little over 200,000 tons were actually delivered during the first half of the year. Whatever wheat was imported was required for the wheat importing provinces in North India and the Government of India could spare none for Madras from January onwards. A tentative allotment of 160,000 tons of rice both from internal and external sources was made to this province for the Kharif year, but we were told that deliveries

particularly of rice from overseas was uncertain and depended on actual arrivals. As the availabilities were so uncertain and varied from month to month, the Government of India started the practice of holding a monthly conference of the officers of the deficit provinces and States and distributing what could be fairly depended upon to arrive during the next month among the deficit areas so as to leave them at the end of the month the same proportion of stocks with reference to their commitments. This distribution is equitable as far as it goes; but places the Province in a disadvantageous position owing to universal rationing. In other administrations people in rationed areas, if stocks run out, could go out to non-rationed areas and buy what they can afford to; specially because products are not rationed. The consequence of failure of supplies will therefore be more serious in Madras than elsewhere. The prospects of imports for the second half-year steadily deteriorated and the Government of India warned us that we should rely mainly on our own resources and make the best use of them. If they can, they will help, but it would be most imprudent to base our plans on their help. The quantities imported up to 28th August 1947 are 121,970 tons of rice, 56,210 tons of wheat and wheat products and 35,073 tons of millets. The Government of India have made an allotment of 7,500 tons of overseas rice and 500 tons of wheat and flour for the month of September and about 6,000 tons of rice are due from Central Provinces and Sind against the quotas previously allotted. It is hoped that these allotments will materialize in time. It seems very unlikely that the Government of India can supply any more rice till the commencement of the next Kharif year on 1st November 1947, but they may be able to spare some wheat and milo from October onwards when it begins to arrive from America.

Beginning of crisis

13. When I took charge as Minister for Food along with other Ministers forming this Government at the end of March 1947, procurement had stopped in Guntur district and there were reports that there were only about a week's stocks in the statutorily rationed towns and that rural rationing had broken down; this in a district surplus in rice. As the situation was serious and brooked no delay, the agency for procurement entrusted to the producers-*cum*-consumers societies was suspended and handed back to millers and dealers. The Commissioner of Civil Supplies was deputed to make a special investigation and he reported that restoration of millers was necessary in the districts of Guntur and Kistna and though the societies had not done badly in East and West Godavari districts, millers could have done better. As the stocks in the deficit districts were dropping steadily, it was considered unsafe to continue the experiment of the societies and the procurement agency was restored to the millers in the other three districts also. Other impediments were also removed. Collectors were asked to instruct their officers to fix the targets for procurement for villages themselves based on the performance of last year and the yields this year respective of the village committees. They were also authorized to remove co-operative organizations which had been entrusted with procurement in several districts where they found them inefficient and substitute other suitable agencies to do the work. These measures had some effect and procurement improved slightly; but the main grievance of inadequate prices remained. The best that we could do, consistent with the price policy of the Government of India, was to raise the village-site prices by 4 annas a maund of paddy by adjustments of the margins to the wholesalers and millers. But this was not considered adequate by the producers. The stocks on hand and the future prospects did not warrant the hopes of being able to continue the overall 12 oz. ration and it was reduced to 10 oz. in all districts with effect from 25th May 1947.

14. The Hon'ble Minister for Food and Agriculture (Dr. Rajendra Prasad) visited this Province in May to study the conditions for himself and the Hon'ble Prime Minister and myself had several discussions with him particularly on the question of prices. He found himself unable to agree to any price revision; but promised to consider if a scheme for assistance in the shape of manure was sent up. Procurement was again slowing down, and it became evident that very drastic and urgent steps were necessary if the situation was to be saved. The composition of the ration was re-adjusted to reduce the demand for rice; it is now 8 oz. rice and 2 oz. of millets (milo), etc., for rice eaters; 1 oz. of rice and 9 oz. of millets, etc., for millet eaters and 3 oz. of rice and 7 oz. millets, etc., for mixed diet eaters; and if they forego rice altogether they may take 12 oz. of millets, milo, maize, etc. The bonus scheme was also sanctioned with retrospective effect, under which for every maund of paddy delivered, half a rupee would be paid in cash and half a rupee will be given as a bonus coupon exchangeable for manure or other accessories of production. The scheme in the light of criticism has been slightly modified to make it more tempting. Assuming $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons of rice are procured during the year, this scheme will cost approximately six crores of rupees; it is proposed to recover half from the consumers, and the Government of India and this Government bear the other half in equal shares. The cost to this Government will be at the least a crore and half of rupees.

15. As the ration, particularly the rice ration, is very meagre, the Government have arranged for the sale of potatoes in all ration shops at the same rate as it is sold on the Nilgiris, the Government bearing the cost of transport. This subsidy is expected to cost about five lakhs of rupees. Rice imported from other parts of India is sold at the same rate as rice grown in this province to avoid hardship to consumers. As working stocks are low, they have to be frequently transferred from one place to another to avoid a breakdown and the Government bear the transport charges in the interest of consumers. The Government will thus have to spend from 3 to 4 crores of rupee this year also on food subsidies apart from the large staff employed in the Civil Supplies Department.

Recent Improvements

16. Procurement has of late shown some improvement, but still falls short of expectations. Against a target of 1,787,600 tons of rice, the quantity procured up to 31st August 1947 amounted to 1,204,303 tons, and 87,638 tons of millets have been procured out of the target of 148,560 tons and there are only 2 months left. I will not trouble you with detailed figures for districts, but would invite your attention to the procurement in the usually heavy rice surplus districts.

District.	TONS.	
East Godavari	83,686	**Actual procurement from 1st November 1946 to 31st August 1947.**
West Godavari	172,264	
Kistna ..	128,950	
Guntur ..	49,065	
Nellore ..	43,468	
Tanjore ..	212,254	

Details of procurement for the last Kharif year 1945–46 were as follows :—

Districts.	Production of rice.	Target fixed for procurement of rice.	Actual procurement in 1945–46.
	TONS.	TONS.	TONS.
East Godavari.	313,000	135,458	120,735
West Godavari.	309,000	210,925	227,454
Kistna ..	272,000	215,684	180,167
Guntur ..	191,000	114,074	117,581
Nellore ..	109,000	48,439	63,741
Tanjore ..	572,000	295,626	283,492

It will be observed from the above that the northern surplus districts have had a better crop in 1946–47 and all the districts except Tanjore have still considerable quantities to deliver. The variations in the target fixed for procurement and the actual procurement in 1945–46 are due to the fact that the target had to be revised thrice during 1945–46 for the following reasons :—

1. There was a cyclone about October 1945 which caused a lot of damage to the crops in the Circar districts. As a consequence the target had to be lowered.

2. On account of the failure of the Mettur Dam the *thaladi* (second crop) in Tanjore district was similarly affected.

3. In May-June 1946, the yield of *Dalwa* crop in the Circar districts was much higher than was anticipated with the result our target was also raised, and the procurement made according to the target figure.

17. The requirements for the rest of the Kharif year on the present revised scales of rations have been estimated as follows :—

	Rice.	Other grains (millets, wheat, etc.)
	TONS.	TONS.
August 28th to 31st.	14,500	1,820
September	141,800	17,800
October	138,600	17,400
One month buffer stock.	140,000	17,500
	434,900	54,520
Stocks on 28th August 1947 under Government control.	153,378	25,843
Additional quantity required.	281,522	28,677

The stocks on hand represent nearly five weeks' requirements, but they are very unevenly distributed. Thus Kistna, West Godavari, Tanjore, with reference to their rationed requirements have stocks for about 12 weeks, 20 weeks and 14 weeks respectively, while Malabar, South Kanara, and Coimbatore and Madras have stocks enough for 2 weeks, under a week, 3½ weeks and 2 weeks only. The danger of a breakdown in the deficit districts if supplies do not reach them promptly and regularly is evident. As I have said above, the Government of India are not likely to be able to give any more rice beyond the 13,500 tons referred to above during the rest of this year and the other grains they may spare are not likely to be considerable. It is therefore imperative that if a breakdown and possibly starvation are to be averted, the Province must raise another about 268,000 tons of rice from its own resources. This will have to be done as soon as possible, as the ensuing months are rainy months when processing of rice is likely to be impeded for days and communications are likely to break down. This is our immediate task. We should address ourselves to it with a will. I have visited several districts already and propose to tour as many more as possible to explain the seriousness of the situation and enlist the support and co-operation of the public. My colleagues have also undertaken to do the same and if there is adequate response, we should pull through.

Arrangements for Future

18. The next Kharif year is not far off, and it is necessary to think of the arrangements for the next year. As the Hon'ble Members are aware, a Provincial Food Council consisting of representatives of all interests was recently constituted and it held its first meeting on 11th August 1947. All the outstanding problems were discussed by that body and I am very grateful for its valuable suggestions. A sub-committee of the Council has been set up to go into the question of prices and suggest suitable prices to be paid for the new crop. As soon as its recommendations are received and examined by the Government, they will try their best to persuade the Government of India to agree to the fixation of prices which, while bearing the interest of consumers in mind, do justice to the producers.

19. The experiences of 1945–46 and 1946–47 serve to show that the Government have taken on themslves a very heavy responsibility by embarking on universal rationing. I compare below the resources for last year and this year :—

	1945-46.	1946-47.
	TONS.	TONS.
Production of rice ..	4,241,000	4,795,000
Production of millets.	2,127,000	2,114,000
Imports	603,000	213,253 (Up to 28th August 1947).
Total ..	6,971,000	7,122,253

The resources in the year 1946–47 are slightly more than in the previous year. Last year, the overall ration never went below 12 oz., this year the maintenance of rationing even at 10 oz. is in grave doubt. The truth is that people are getting tired and impatient of the never ending demands on behalf of the Government. It seems therefore sufficient if the Government limit their responsibilities to areas which need protection, such as towns, industries, deficit parts of districts. It has therefore been suggested that rural rationing may be discontinued except in Malabar and statutory rationing be given up in towns in surplus districts as the crops of the next year are harvested. After all the Government cannot undertake indefinitely the direct feeding of the people and steps should be taken some day, the sooner the better, to restore, as far as may be, the normal channels of distribution.

Long range Aspect

20. Before I close, I wish to refer to the long-range aspect of the food problem. Statistics show that, whatever the results of the Grow More Food campaign may have been, the area under paddy and the yield are almost stationary during the last decade while the area under millets has decreased and the yield has gone down by barely a million tons. The population keeps on increasing inexorably in geometric ratio of about 1 per cent per year, thus widening the gap between the resources and the demand for food. In the last two years the Government have been spending about 14 crores of rupees on food subsidies alone and the Government cannot afford to continue to do so indefinitely. With all its vast resources of land and rivers, Madras has been lining up in a queue begging of other areas for food ; it has not been able to buy enough and will not be in the near future able to do so, particularly to feed its increasing population. If the humiliations, anxieties, sufferings and expenses of the last six years are to be avoided, this Province should grow food to provide its population with at least enough for subsistence, if not enough to satisfy the nutritional standards. There should be a re-orientation of the Grow More Food Policy and it should be pursued with vigour and with top priority over all other post-war schemes. Else, all talk of progress will come to naught and we shall be in peril.

Food Situation in the Province

Report for the first fortnight of September 1947

Weather conditions and crop prospects.—There was light to moderate rainfall during the fortnight.

The level of water in the Mettur Reservoir on 15th September 1947 was 119·1 feet as against 120·8 feet on 15th September 1946.

The condition of standing crops was generally fair except in parts of East Godavari, Kistna, Kurnool, Bellary, Chittoor, Madura and South Kanara districts.

Harvest of paddy was proceeding in parts of Tanjore, Madura, Ramnad and Malabar districts and of dry crops in the districts of Vizagapatam, West Godavari, Bellary, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly. The outturn was generally fair.

Market conditions and trend of prices.—There were no perceptible changes in the prices of cereals and pulses. The position regarding the prices of oils, oil-seeds, oil-cakes, etc., was as follows :—

No change—Gingelly oil, gingelly oil-cake and groundnut oil-cake.

Rise—Cotton seed (1·9 per cent).

Fall—Groundnut (shelled) (1·3 per cent), gingelly seed (0·3 per cent), copra (0·6 per cent), cocoanut oil (3·7 per cent) and groundnut oil (3·7 per cent).

Procurement.—The following statements show the quantities of paddy, rice and millets locally procured in the Province and the quantities of cereals and pulses imported from sources abroad :—

(*a*) Local procurement during the fortnight ending 31st August 1947—

	TONS.	
Paddy ..	28,800	Together equivalent to 31,464 tons in terms of rice.
Rice ..	11,482	
Millets.	4,628	

(*b*) Receipts from other Provinces and States during the fortnight ending 15th September 1947—

	TONS.	
Rice ..	3,598	(Orissa—11 tons: Eastern States—360 tons: Central Provinces 3,227 tons.)
Millets ..	72	(35 tons of jowar and 37 tons of ragi from Orissa.)
Wheat and Products.	..	
Pulses—		
Black-gram.	1,547	
Redgram.	39	
Greengram.	..	
Bengal-gram.	585	
Total ..	2,171	

(*c*) Imports from overseas during the fortnight ending 15th September 1947—

	TONS.	
Rice ..	2,079	(Ex S.S. "Empire Conrad.)"
Millets	..	
Wheat and products.	..	

Stock and supply position of principal foodgrains.—*Rice.*—As a result of the intensive drive started in August, procurement in the recent weeks has shown some improvement as indicated by the following figures :—

Procurement during week ending—

		TONS.
21st August 1947	..	13,316
28th August 1947	..	13,889
4th September 1947	..	18,355
11th Septmeber 1947	..	21,737

This however was not sufficient to check the decline in the Provincial stock which registered a further fall from 153,378 tons on 28th August 1947 to 144,995 tons on 11th September 1947. The position in the deficit districts, particularly Malabar and South Kanara, continues to be unsatisfactory.

Millets.—The stock of millets in the Province fell from 23,653 tons on 28th August 1947 to 19,753 tons on 11th September 1947. Shortage was felt during the fortnight in the districts of Vizagapatam, Guntur, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, the Nilgiris and in Madras City. Supplies to the City and the other needy areas have been arranged and in some cases the stocks are in transit. As, however, the present stock in the Province is barely sufficient for one month and as the offtake is increasing (at a rapid pace in some districts), much difficulty is experienced in arranging timely supplies. A shipment of 8,000 tons of milo, if received before the end of this month, will help to ease the situation.

Maize.—The stock on 11th September 1947 was 777 tons as against 749 tons in 28th August 1947.

Barley.—The stock dropped from 218 tons on 28th August 1947 to 158 tons on 11th September 1947. The present stock is expected to be sold out in a month.

Wheat and wheat products.—The stock of wheat in the Province was 1,491 tons on 11th September 1947 as against 951 tons on 28th August 1947. The present stock will last till about the third week of October 1947.

The stock of wheat products fell from 272 tons on 28th August 1947 to 227 tons on 11th September 1947. The present stock is expected to last only till the end of this month. The position may improve slightly after the receipt of the 500 tons allotted to this Province recently.

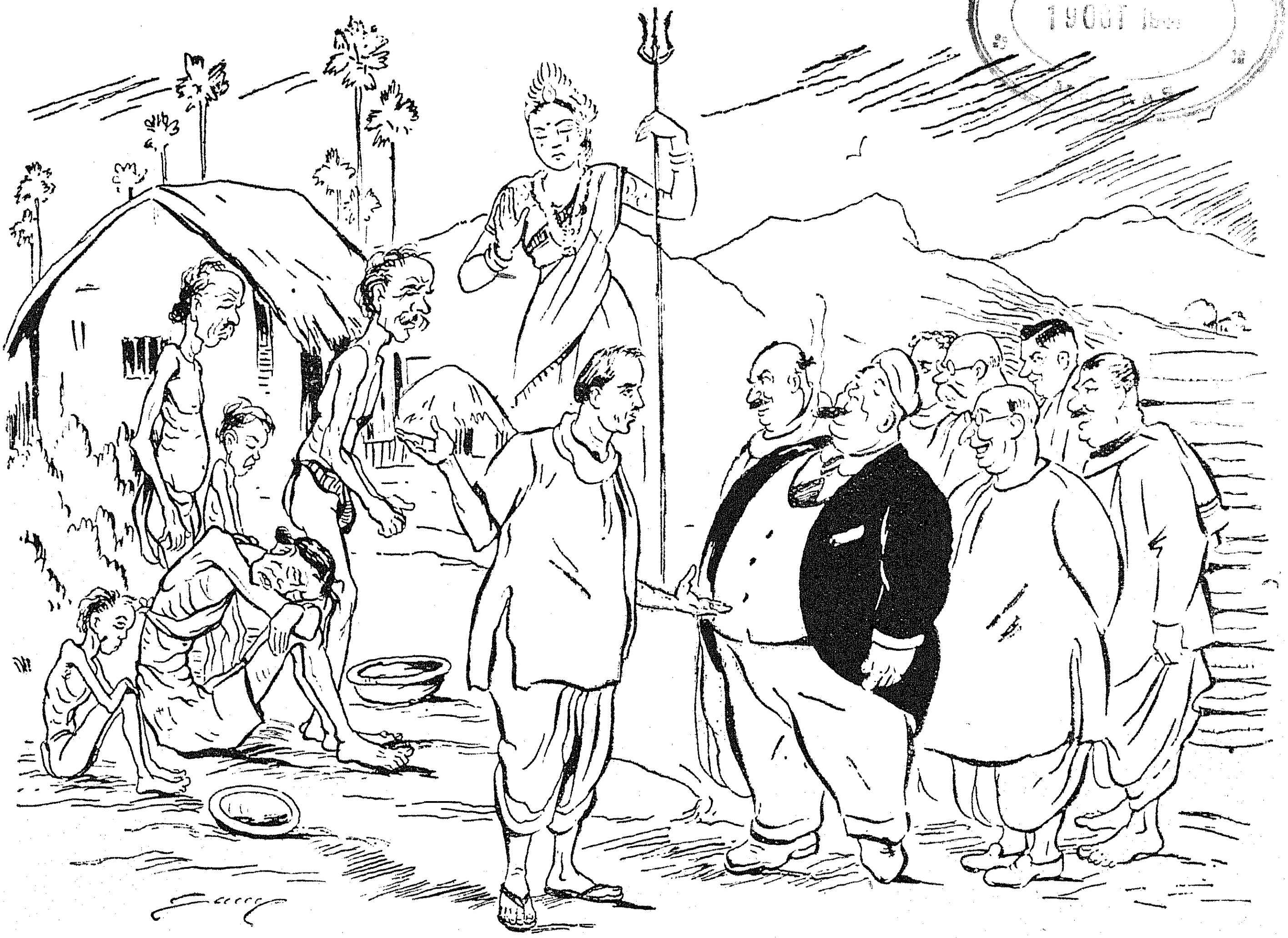
Pulses.—The pulses position in general, and particularly with regard to blackgram and redgram, has not been satisfactory. Shortage of one or more varieties of pulses has been reported from the following districts :—

Nilgiris	..	Blackgram and greengram.
Guntur	..	Bengalgram
Nellore	..	Redgram and blackgram.
Chingleput.		Redgram, blackgram and greengram.
Tanjore	..	Redgram, dhal and bengalgram flour.
Trichinopoly.		Redgram.
Bellary	..	All pulses, particularly bengalgram and toor dhal.
Madura	..	Greengram and blackgram.
Anantapur.		Bengalgram and redgram.

Miscellaneous commodities.—Stock of firewood was not adequate in parts of Guntur district and in the towns of Coimbatore, Villupuram, Bezwada and Masulipatam.

Scarcity of matches was felt in parts of Chingleput district.

They are Flesh of Our Flesh



" You know 3 million people died of starvation in Bengal. A situation of that kind should not be repeated here. I solicit your wholehearted co-operation in the noble task of feeding the people of the Province.

—The Hon'ble the Prime Minister in his speech at Kumbakonam on September 4, 1947.

No Death Due to Starvation

Allegations Refuted

During the food debate on the 25th instant, allegations were made on the floor of the Legislative Assembly that 14 persons died of starvation in the Agency tract of the East Godavari district. Immediately the Collector of East Godavari was contacted on the phone and his reply that there was absolutely no death in the area due to starvation was conveyed by the Hon'ble Minister for Food to the Legislative Assembly on the same day. Later in the day, however, Mr. T. Prakasam read out the names of the 14 persons who were alleged to have died from starvation. These names were communicated immediately to the Collector of East Godavari and he was asked to report in the matter. On the 26th, the Collector replied on the phone that of the 14 names read out, one was still living and that the other 13 were really dead but the cause of death was not starvation but something else. The names of the persons who were alleged to have died of starvation with the real reasons for death in the case of those who were dead are given below :—

Village ; name ; age ; real reason for death as reported by Collector through phone.

(1) Rampa ; Kokuri Tirupatamma ; 40 ; pleurisy.

(2) Rampa ; Pampireddi Surayya; 35 ; tuberculosis.

(3) Rampa ; Pampireddi Chinnamma ; 25 ; abnormal delivery. (Died a month ago.)

(4) Rampa ; Korukonda Jaggayya ; 10 ; malaria and anæmia.

(5) Marrivada ; Singotu Butchayya ; 60 ; beri-beri ; suffered for five months.

(6) Sripuram ; Chollam Suranna ; 35 ; aged 50 and not 35 ; died of gastric ulcer.

(7) Bendapalli ; Sundam bullimmi ; 50 ; aged 90 and not 50 ; died of old age.

(8) Mulapadu ; Karamu Papudamma ; 25 ; abnormal delivery. (Died three days after delivery.)

(9) Chilakamamidi ; Enbukula Chinna Reddi ; 25 ; still living. Hale and healthy. He is the village munsif

(10) Chilakamamidi ; Kundla Balayya Reddi ; 40 ; diarrhœa.

(11) Chilakamamidi ; Vadugula Chinnayya ; 50 ; malaria.

(12) Chilakamamidi ; Kathula Ramayya ; 36 ; diarrhœa.

(13) Chilakamamidi ; Boyna Balayya ; 75 ; tuberculosis.

(14) Chilakamamidi ; Boyna Chilakamma ; 45 ; beri-beri.

This answer of the Collector of East Godavari was read out to the Press, and the Legislative Assembly by the Hon'ble Minister for Food on the afternoon of the 26th September. The Collector was asked by the Government officially to investigate the allegations made in the petition of Mr. M. V. Somasundaram from whose letter the 14 names were read out by Mr. T. Prakasam and report about the facts. The Government have now received the report of the Collector. It shows that detailed enquiries into the allegations were made by the Revenue Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry. The allegations of death by starvation were first made by one Kommana Veerabhadra Rao, son of Gavarayya, bamboo merchant, Rampa Chodavaram, to Sri M. V. Somasundaram, Advocate, Rajahmundry. It would appear that on the basis of this information Mr. Somasundaram wrote a letter to a certain M.L.A., who passed it on to Mr. Prakasam. During his enquiry the Revenue Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry, who was accompanied by the two informers referred to above obtained sworn statements from them. These sworn statements are published below for the information of the public :—

Copy of sworn statement of Kommana Veerabhadra Rao, son of Gavarayya, bomboo merchant, Rampa Chodavaram.

On the information given to me by Vantikula Chinna Reddi, village munsif of Chilakamamidi, I informed Sri M. V. Somasundaram, Advocate, Rajahmundry, on 18th September 1947 at Rajahmundry that 12 persons in Rampa Chodavaram and other muttas died of starvation. I have not verified whether the information is correct or not. The very same Vantikula Chinna Reddi now says before all of us that the deaths were due to chronic diseases and diarrhœa and not due to starvation. The Press representatives of *Hindu*, *Andhra Patrika* and *Indian Express* were present when I informed Sri M. V. Somasundaram, Advocate, Rajahmundry, about the deaths on 18th September 1947.

(Signed) Kommana Veerabhadra Rao,
Organizer, Yuvajana Congress, and Secretary, Taluk Congress, Rampa Chodavaram.

Taken down by me, read over, interpreted and admitted to be correct.

(Signed) B. Venkatarathnam,
Revenue Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry.

24th September 1947.

Sworn statement of Sri M. V. Somasundaram, Advocate, Rajahmundry.

On 18th September 1947, Sri Kommana Veerabhadra Rao of Rampa Chodavaram came to Shraddananda-ghat, Rajahmundry, and informed me and the press representatives of *Hindu*, *Andhra Patrika* and *Indian Express* that 12 persons in Rampa Chodavaram taluk died of starvation. I directed him to furnish me with the list of persons that died. He sent me this list (Exhibit A). I accompanied the Revenue Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry, and the Deputy Tahsildar, Rampa Chodavaram. On verification, the persons interviewed assert that no body died of starvation. I am satisfied that the situation is not so serious as reported.

(Signed) M. V. Somasundaram,
Advocate and President, District Youth Congress.

24th September 1947.

Taken down by me, read over and admitted to be correct.

(Signed) B. Venkatarathnam,
Revenue Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry.

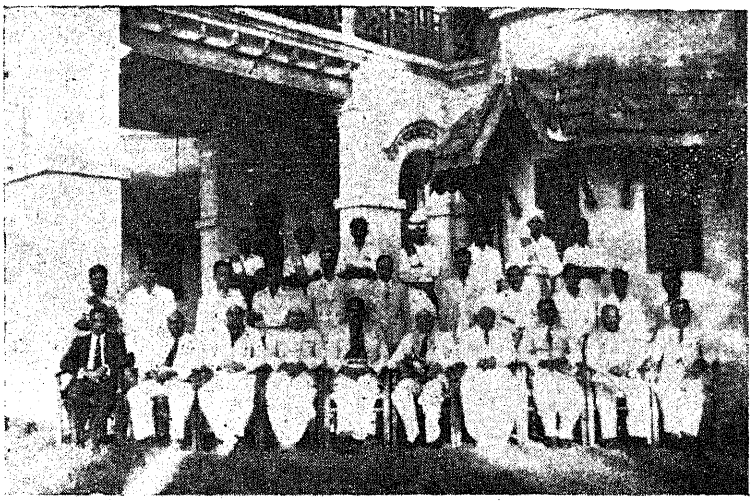
24th September 1947.

The Revenue Divisional Officer had also obtained sworn statements from the village munsifs of Chilakamamidi, Bandapalli, Mulapadu and Rampa, the presidents of the village food committees of Rampa Chodavaram and some important ryots. All these statements go to prove that there was absolutely no case of death on account of starvation in the area as alleged and there was no lack of foodstuffs. In a telegram received by Government from Sri M. V. Somasundaram referred to above, it is stated that the deceased persons had no food for days, that they resorted to eating leaves, palmyra fruits, tamarind seeds, kanji, causing diarrhœa and deaths. The Revenue Divisional Officer's enquiry also revealed that all the deceased persons were living on rations supplied by the Government supplementing it with samai, korra, gunta, ragi, leafy vegetables, tender roots of bamboos, etc., and also Ambalai prepared out of the tamarind seeds as it has a cooling effect on the system and that these diets are not unusual for the people in the Agency. The Medical Officer at Rampa Chodavaram and also the Health Inspector of the place who have visited all the villages in the taluk have certified that to their knowledge no cases of death due either to starvation or mal-nutrition have come to their notice though they had particularly been on the lookout for such cases and that the people in the area have been living on Government rationed rice which is being distributed, supplementing it by leafy vegetables, etc. The Medical Officer has also stated that he treated some cases of diarrhœa due to overeating of beef and palmyra fruits which these people take ordinarily as food. From the facts stated above, the public will readily understand that there have been no cases of death due to starvation in the area and that the allegations to the contrary are false. The Government also understand that the persons who set the rumour afloat had a grouse against the local supply officers on account of the detection by the latter of certain illegal activities on their part and that Mr. Somasundaram merely made use of the information given by them without verification.

The Government have examined the question whether the concession in the shape of exempting stage carriages from payment of the tax leviable under the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931, in respect of standing passengers, should be continued. They have decided that it should be continued only in respect of stage carriages exclusively used on the roads in the Madras City and that it should be withdrawn as soon as the vehicles are taken over by the State. In respect of stage carriages which are used on roads outside the City of Madras and which are permitted to carry standing passengers, additional tax will be levied for each standing passenger at one-third of the rate leviable for each sitting passenger under the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1931, with effect from the quarter commencing with the 1st October 1947.

Save for Yourself—And the Nation

National Savings Drive to be Intensified



Group photo of the Third National Savings Officers' Conference held recently in Madras

The Third Conference of Assistant National Savings Officers was held in Madras from the 11th to the 13th of September 1947, to discuss measures to intensify the Savings Drive. The Provincial National Savings Officers presided over the Conference.

It was emphasised that the successful working of the scheme required the whole-hearted co-operation of officials, social workers and the public. A plan for intensive development, to enlarge the existing societies by increasing the number of members, and amount of contributions, and a plan for extensive expansion by starting new societies were discussed. It was also pointed that village panchayats could be helpful in the formation of Savings groups.

The continued rise in recent months in the index of prices of essential commodities and foodgrains has been standing in the way of the middle and lower class people buying National Savings Certificates in large numbers. Again, in the last half-year the intensive collections for share capital for producer-cum-consumers' co-operative societies in Northern Circars, and the offering of shares by a number of new industrial concerns in South India were mainly the reasons for large encashment in the Northern Circar districts and in Salem. These large encashments themselves have helped to increase the sale of savings certificates as the confidence among the public in the safety of these investments has since improved considerably.

The working of the scheme in the prohibition districts in particular was studied. The proposal to supply hundi boxes to ex-addicts has had to be given up, in view of the enormous cost involved. It was also pointed out that the savings scheme could not make much headway in prohibition districts within a short period because the initial savings of the ex-addicts will naturally be spent on their immediate wants, which must have been suffering neglect for a long time; only when they were able to pass over this phase could a satisfactory response be expected from them.

The Conference then proceeded to consider how far labour was taking advantage of the scheme. Till a short time back, the scheme was not received favourably by the workers. Of late, the response is better, and there is now much scope for propaganda and work among them.

The need for an active publicity campaign was stressed. Sanction has been obtained, in the first instance, for a station waggon fitted with a microphone, magic lantern and a cinematograph.

The Province has been divided into eight areas, for this work, with the City of Madras as a separate unit. On 1st January 1947, 3,435 persons had been enrolled in groups, and the total amount agreed to be subscribed was Rs. 8,470-5-0. On 31st July 1947, no less than 15,930 persons had been enrolled in groups, and the amount agreed to be subscribed reached Rs. 56,425-4-0. This is an index of the growing popularity of this scheme, which built on sound principles is bound to play a great part in the nation-building activities that await us.

Labour Situation in the Madras Province

Report for the First Fortnight of September 1947

The Government have authorized the Commissioner of Labour, Madras, to notify the Employment Exchanges of the illegality of strikes or lockouts and direct them to submit workers to fill vacancies on account of illegal strikes or lockouts.

The Government have directed that the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (Central Act XIV of 1947), shall apply to all partially excluded areas in the Province of Madras subject to the modification that section 1 (3) thereof shall be omitted.

The Government have directed transport by boats in minor ports to be public utility services for the purpose of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, for a period of six months.

The Government of Madras have referred the dispute between the workers and the managements of the Aluminium Factories in Vizianagram, Rajahmundry, Bezwada, Ellore and other places in Vizagapatam, Godavari (East), Godavari (West) Kistna and Guntur districts in respect of the rates of wages to be paid to different classes of workers in the industry to the Industrial Tribunal, Bezwada, for adjudication.

The Government of Madras have accepted the award of the Industrial Tribunal in the dispute between the workers and the management of the City Motor Service, Limited, Madras (referred for adjudication in G.O. Ms. No. 2568, Development, dated 11th June 1947) regarding reinstatement of 27 workers and payment of bonus to 14 workers.

The Government of Madras have referred the dispute between the workers and the management of the Gnanambika Mills, Coimbatore, to the Industrial Tribunal, Coimbatore, for adjudication regarding victimisation of certain workers.

The National Engineering Works, Cocanada, was closed from 25th June 1947 to 31st August 1947. The Secretary, The Cocanada Iron Foundry Workers' Union, Cocanada, has reported on 4th September 1947 that the management of the National Engineering Works propose to close the factory from 17th September 1947 on the plea of want of raw materials.

The Jayaram Mills, Rajapalayam, Madura, have closed the spinning section on 30th August 1947 without notice. Sri P. S. Kumaraswami Raja, M.L.A., intervened and brought about a settlement of the dispute.

The Government of Madras have directed the District Magistrate, Madura, to prosecute the management of the Mahalakshmi Textile Mills, Limited, Pasumalai, Madura, if the awards of the adjudicators have not yet been implemented.

The workers staged a strike on 11th September 1947, as a protest against the failure of the management to pay interim relief as required in the adjudicator's award. The management have declared a lock-out. The mangement have been asked to lift the lock-out and the workers to call off the strike pending settlement of the dispute.

The Government of Madras have referred the dispute regarding bonus between the workers and the management of the Mahalakshmi Textile Mills, Limited, Pasumalai, Madura, to the Industrial Tribunal, Madura, for adjudication

The management of some Cigar factories, Badagara, closed their factories from 6th August 1947. The Commissioner of Labour, Madras, visited Calicut and met the representatives of the workers and some of the factory owners. The workers' representatives complained of frequent dismissals and non-implementation of adjudicator's award. The owners said that they were working at a loss and hence closed down the factories but were prepared to pay 14 days' wages as compensation. The Commissioner has asked the Labour Conciliation Officer, Calicut, to proceed to Badagara and to persuade the owners to implement the terms of the award before 15th September 1947 on pain of prosecution. In cases where owners have closed down their establishments the Labour Conciliation Officers has been asked to see that the factory owners pay compensation to the workers.

Eighteen out of 46 workers of the Calicut Cotton Mills, Limited, Calicut, struck work without notice at 10-15 a.m. on 25th August 1947 demanding bonus for the year ending 30th June 1947. They were paid 2 weeks' wages with allowance as advance to be recovered in due course. They resumed work the same day.

The workers of the Standard Cotton and Silk Weaving Company, Limited, Calicut, staged a stay-in-strike at 4-30 p.m. on 27th August 1947 demanding advance for Onam. Later on they resumed work when the management agreed to allow them to draw 90 per cent of the welfare amount as advance.

About 50 workers of the Lakshmi Saw Mills, Kasargod, were locked out on 2nd September 1947. The Labour Conciliation Officer, Calicut, has been instructed to settle the dispute and to advise the management to allow the workers to resume work and to await the result of the Court of Inquiry for Timber and Saw Mills.

The Chirakkal Taluk Handloom Weavers' Union, has wired on 2nd September 1947, that the management of the Lakshmisahaya Weaving Factory, Alavil, Cannanore, have declared a lock-out. The Labour Conciliation Officer, Calicut, has been asked to bring about a settlement of the dispute.

The strike notice given by the N. V. G. B. Motor Workers' Union, Calicut, has been withdrawn consequent on an agreement reached between the parties on 4th September 1947.

The General Secretary, The Mettupalayam-Nilgiris Motor Workers' Union, Coonoor R.S., has issued a notice of strike to the Managing Director of the M.C.S. Limited, stating that their workers will go on strike from 19th September 1947 if their demands for interim relief, regular payment of wages, batta for extra trips, etc., are not conceded before then. The Labour Conciliation Officer, Coimbatore, has been asked to bring about an amicable settlement of the dispute.

The management of the Hindustan Construction Company, Limited, Vizagapatam, have reported that their workmen have resorted to stay-in-strike from 4th September 1947 during the pendancy of the proceedings before the Industrial Tribunal and so they have notified them that disciplinary action will be taken against them if they do not end the strike at once. The Industrial Tribunal is proceeding with the inquiry into this dispute and the dispute in Scindia Steam Navigation Company, Vizagapatam, and is expected to submit its awards to Government soon.

Activities of the Education Department

Salient features for September 1947

Education—University.—The Government have passed orders for the taking over by the Government of the Municipal Women College at Guntur.

Basic Education.—Two new Basic Training Schools have been opened, one near Chidambaram (South Arcot district) and another in the Madura district.

These bring the number of Basic Training Schools in the Province to eight including the one at Seethanagaram (East Godavari district).

General.—The Government have constituted a committee to advise them on the question how the main elements of "Scouting" can be introduced in the schools of this Province as part of the school curricula so that all boys and girls may have the benefit of that training.

The Government have also constituted a Committee to inspect vacant sites in certain taluks of Chingleput district which are said to be useful for consideration for use as camps for school and college students and scouts.

* * *

Subscriptions to the National Savings Certificates received from the Province for the week ended 30th August 1947, total Rs. 2,69,555. Madras continues to hold the first place in the list of collections while Tanjore comes second and Coimbatore, third. The total contribution for the period from the 1st of April 1947 up to 30th August 1947 amounts to Rs. 63,09,120.

Madras Government's Plans for Refugee Relief

The public are aware that the Madras Government have agreed to receive about 10,000 refugees from the distressed areas in the Punjab, Sind and the North-West Frontier Provinces and to accommodate them here until the conditions in the North are eased. It may be made clear that the Government have not undertaken any responsibility for the permanent rehabilitation of these refugees though it will be open to the latter to secure jobs on their own initiative and efforts. What they have done is to place Sri K. Kodandapani Pillai, Special Officer and Protector of Emigrants, who has had considerable experience in dealing with evacuees from Burma and South East Asia, in general charge of the arrangements for the reception of the refugees with a Deputy Collector to assist him. Lieutenant Colonel Gill, Inspector-General of Prisons and President of the Local Punjab Association, is also assisting in the arrangements. It may be recalled that at a public meeting held at the Banqueting Hall on 11th September 1947, the Hon'ble Prime Minister and others appealed for public co-operation and funds and an influential committee has been formed with the Sheriff of Madras as Chairman to collect funds.

So far 45 persons in six families have arrived and they are put up at Kilpauk and another batch of nine refugees is accommodated at Saidapet. A special Executive Engineer has been appointed to go round the province and inspect the military camps that have been vacated recently and select a few sites with water-supply, electrical connections and other amenities which could be made habitable without much cost. The intention is to spread evenly these several refugee camps throughout the Province, lest concentration of large numbers of them in a particular area should create special problems. The Government of the Malayan Union have agreed to lend the Avadi Emigration Depot for the use of the refugees. The military authorities have agreed to place at the disposal of the Government, the Saidapet Holiday Home. They have also been asked to render assistance in the form of transport, equipment, etc., and they have, in addition, provided a military officer to maintain liaison with the Special Officer and Protector of Emigrants.

The Government have made a contribution of rupees one lakh for relief work, out of which Rs. 10,000 has been sanctioned for the feeding of the refugees. In addition to giving an allowance of Re. 1-4-0 for the first adult in each family, Re. 0-15-0 for each additional adult and Re. 0-10-0 for each child (under 12), a sum not exceeding Rs. 5 per head per mensem will also be paid for sundry expenses. The Triplicane Urban Co-operative Society has been asked to open a rationing shop for the refugee camp in Lutteral Gardens and one at Avadi Emigration Depot to enable refugees to purchase their provisions and other necessities. The provision of a minimum amount of clothing for the refugees has also been undertaken by the Government and a sum of Rs. 50,000 has been sanctioned for this purpose. Two sets of clothes are proposed to be supplied to each of the refugees and Provincial Textile Commissioner has directed wholesale dealers to sell the required quantities of cloth to the Protector of Emigrants, who in turn will make the supplies to the refugees. In the meantime such of the ready-made garments and bedding as are available with the Protector of Emigrants from the old stock transferred to him from the A.R.P. and other sources are being utilized to meet the urgent requirements of the refugees.

The Central Refugee Committee, Delhi, has been asked to inoculate all persons against cholera and re-vaccinate all refugees before they are despatched to Madras. If this is not done the Corporation Health Staff and the Health Staff of the Director of Public Health will carry out the inoculations and re-vaccinations as soon as these refugees arrive. The Government of India are being requested to accept liability for all expenditure in connection with the refugees to set apart, provisionally a sum similar to the contribution of the Provincial Government.

The Government trust that, in the humanitarian task of helping the distressed refugees, they will have the full co-operation and sympathy of the public in general. Such a sharing of distress and troubles of other provinces will not only exalt this province in the estimation of others but is also calculated to promote inter-provincial harmony, which is such an indispensable requisite, especially in the present day state of affairs.

BOARD SCHOOL TEACHERS' SCALES REVISED

The Government have reconsidered the question whether teachers in the service of district boards and municipal councils should not also be given weightage for their service in the scales existing prior to 1st January 1947 as in the case of Government servants and have decided that weightage should be given to district board and municipal employees in respect of such service. They have now decided that the initial pay of teachers employed in elementary schools under the district boards and municipal councils shall be refixed in the revised scales in accordance with the following provisions :—

(*a*) The pay of a teacher shall be fixed in the revised scale at the stage next above the aggregate of his pay in the existing scale and his temporary additional pay, if any, whether such aggregate represents a stage in the revised scale or not ;

(*b*) If such aggregate is less than the minimum of the revised scale, his pay shall be fixed at such minimum ;

(*c*) After his pay is fixed under clause (*a*) or (*b*) as the case may be, he shall be granted advance increments in the revised scale as specified below :—

(i) for a service of 4 years and more but less than 8 years in the existing scale—*One advance increment.*

(ii) for a service of 8 years and more but less than 12 years in the existing scale—*Two advance increments.*

(iii) for a service of 12 years and more but less than 16 years in the existing scale—*Three advance increments.*

(iv) for a service of 16 years and more in the existing scale—*Four advance increments.*

(*d*) where an employee is granted any advance increment or increments under clause (*c*), only service from the date on which such advance increment or increments are given, shall count for further increments in the revised scale.

(*e*) An employee not eligible for any advance increment under clause (*c*) shall be allowed to count service in the existing scale of pay for increments in

the revised scales of pay up to a maximum of one year.

(*f*) If the aggregate of his pay in the existing scale and his temporary additional pay is higher than the maximum of the revised scale, his pay shall be fixed at such maximum and he shall draw the excess as personal pay.

(*g*) Except in cases falling under clause (*f*) the pay fixed for an employee in the revised scale shall in no case exceed what would have been admissible had he been in service in the revised scale from the beginning of his service.

(*h*) An employee whose pay in the existing scale of pay is affected adversely on account of the operation of clause (*g*) by his electing to enter the revised scale, shall have his pay fixed with reference to Fundamental Rule 22 and service rendered at the present stage of pay in the existing scale which has not been counted for increment shall count for increment in the revised scale up to a maximum of one year.

It may be recalled that in their orders, dated 10th May 1947, the Government sanctioned the introduction of revised scales of pay of teachers in elementary schools and local bodies as from 1st January 1947. It was ordered that the pay of each of the existing incumbents should be fixed in the revised scale at the stage next above the aggregate of his pay in the existing scale and his temporary additional pay or personal pay, if any, whether such aggregate represents a stage in the revised scale or not. If such aggregate is less than the minimum of the revised scale, his pay should be fixed at such minimum.

It has been represented to the Government that these orders have not benefited appreciably teachers who have put in long service in local bodies.

Questions and Answers in the Legislature

In answer to certain questions by Mr. R. Suryanarayana Rao in the Legislative Council about the distribution of rationed as well as controlled articles, the Hon'ble Minister for Food said :—

(*a*) Before the introduction of the scheme of Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies, distribution of rationed and controlled articles in the Presidency was generally through private agencies and co-operative societies. Since the introduction of the scheme in Malabar, the work of distribution of certain rationed articles such as rice, sugar and kerosene has been entrusted to the Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies, while other controlled articles still continue to be distributed through private channels. In the four Circar districts of East Godavari, West Godavari, Kistna and Guntur, the work of distribution of rationed and controlled articles was intended to be entrusted to the Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies.

(*b*) In Malabar the distribution of rationed articles has been partly entrusted to the Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies. In the Circars only a few societies were able to take over the distribution work from the previous agencies before orders staying such transfer were issued by the Government.

(*c*) In Malabar, most of the retail traders were employed by the Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies. In the Circars, the question does not arise as only very few societies could take over ration shops and even in those cases previous retail traders were employed as far as possible under the instructions of the Government.

(*d*) In view of the answer to clause (*c*) above, the question does not arise in the Circars. In Malabar, each case was examined on its merits and co-operative societies which had a democratic constitution and had a good business reputation were allowed to carry on the work of distribution of controlled articles.

(*e*) There is no iniquity in the orders of the Government regarding the new arrangements. Private merchants and a few co-operative societies whose business in rationed articles was taken over by the new societies have naturally complained about the loss involved, to them. It is in order to meet such complaints that instructions were issued that the retail dealers and their employees who were ousted from business should be absorbed by the new societies as far as possible and that existing co-operative societies with good business reputation may be allowed to continue to do distribution work.

(*f*) Representations have been received only from Harijans for the retention of retail shops now run by them. The Government have issued a general stay order in respect of the transfer of retail ration shops to the Producers-cum-Consumers' Co-operative Societies in all the four Circar districts. In view of this, the question of allotment or re-allotment of ration shops to the Harijans or Muslims does not arise at present.

(*g*) The Government do not consider that the present system of distribution or agency for distribution is inefficient. Inefficient agents are eliminated and substituted by others. As regards the Producers-cum-Consumers Co-operative Societies in the Circars, the Government have set up a Committee which will make recommendations about their future.

* * *

Answering a question on the new scheme for subsidising the sinking of wells, the Hon'ble Minister for Revenue said in the Council that the new scheme provided for the grant of subsidies in South Kanara not only for the construction of new irrigation wells and tanks but also for repairing old irrigation tanks, and that the same provision had been made in the new scheme for Malabar also and subsidies would be granted in that district for constructing new irrigation tanks and repairing existing irrigation tanks. There was no proposal to grant subsidies in the other districts either for the construction of new tanks or for repairs to old tanks.

* * *

In answer to certain questions about the Madras Secretariat, the Hon'ble the Prime Minister said that the number of departments in the Secretariat in 1939 and in 1947 was 9 and 10 respectively, and the cost of the staff was Rs. 11,97,375 and Rs. 21,64,202 respectively. The Hon'ble the Prime Minister added that the Government had appointed a Retrenchment and Reorganization Committee to look into the question of reorganization of departments and of effecting economies in expenditure.

The Language Problem under the New Dispensation

(*By* DR. C. ACHUTHA MENON, PH.D. (Lond.), Malayalam Department, University of Madras)

Introductory

The dawn of Indian Freedom is now spreading its lustre all over the land. It brings with it, as usual, new life and activity that lay dormant in the darkness of the struggle waged before. The fight for independence is characterized with intensive concentration on the goal and consolidation of efforts and outlook. When that motive force disappears, it leaves a vacaum to which minor issues rush in for recognition and attention resulting in temporary chaos and confusion. It is then we realize that problems of peace are more difficult to tackle than problems of war in which the desire for victory provides the necessary impetus for speedy action and achievement.

The division of India into two major dominions as Indian Union and Pakistan has in a way minimised their problems inasmuch as the cultural background of both has beer thereby definitely and precisely demarcated. Otherwise the clash of Hindu-Muslim interests on many a question will be a perpetual source of conflict and disturb the harmony which is sought to be achieved by an attempt at synthesis. The controversy over Hindi or Urdu as a common language is thus closed for ever. Indian Union may unanimously vote for Hindi and Pakistan for Urdu.

The Language Problem of India

But the general language problem of India does not admit of such an easy solution. Now that the two political languages as I would call Hindi and Urdu have settled down in their respective domains, other major languages may now press their claims for recognition. Their multiplicity is by itself a staggering problem and no politician or administrator can afford to ignore this fact. The language experts are able to count ten major languages in the North and five in the South; leaving aside the uncultivated languages of aboriginal tribes living on mountains and other uncivilized areas. Calculating at the rate of at least ten distinct dialects for each major language, the total will easily reach in the neighbourhood of one hundred and fifty. Each language represents a cultural entity eager to nourish or perpetuate its peculiar characteristics. All language groups of the world which philologists are never tired of enumerating—Indo-Aryan, Indo-Iranian, Mongolian, Scythian, Dravidian the latest addition, so on and so forth—have all their representative branches in India. We have also to remember that as a country that cherished one of the earliest civilizations of the world, India has attracted many nations from far and near from primitive times and has been the meeting place of many races and cultures, some of them opposed to each other in fundamental concepts and beliefs. Attraction developed into attachment which culminated in aggression in modern times. Even the steam-roller drive of the Muslim invasions in middle ages has not been able to wipe out any of them completely. They have survived every shock though somewhat mutilated at every turn. After facing invasion after invasion the Indian civilization seems to have grown stronger and stronger to captivate even the conqueror. It is not an uncommon phenomenon in Indian History that a victor when he lays down his arms, sits down to listen to the philosophy of the conquered. A few years after the invasion of Alexander the Great we hear of the first international marriage, or to put it in modern parlance, diplomatic alliance between an Indian King and a Greecian Princess. Several centuries earlier, Solomon the Wise contacted South India to collect gold, peacock, etc., from Beypore-Chaliyam in Greek records (south of Calicut, Malabar). Hindu-Muslim unity was the ideal of Akbar the Great. It is this heterogenous nature, the absorbing power of the Indian civilization that resulted in the cultural deposits in different parts of this continent represented by various languages. The variety of its physical aspects has also helped this process of cultural and linguistic distribution.

The Lingua Franca

It is against this background we have to discuss the language problem. The idea of a common language presupposes the unity of India. It is for the promotion of that ideal that Hindi was for long recommended for adoption as a common language for India. There was strong opposition from the South which has for several centuries—much earlier than that of the Aryan invasion of the North—cultivated a group of languages that have nothing in common with the languages of the North. Almost all the Northern languages come under the category of Prakrit languages that could be traced to Sanskrit, the parental language. The South Indian Languages form a distinct group by themselves and strike an entirely different note in grammatical structure and other features. Though Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam have in modern times borrowed considerably from Sanskrit, their innate Dravidian genius still remains intact except for the addition of a large number of Sanskrit words towards their vocabulary. A sound scholar in any of these three languages may be able to follow Sanskrit to a certain extent even without studying it as a separate language, while a Sanskrit scholar pure and simple may not be able to understand these spoken languages. This is a clear indication that Sanskrit admixture has not interfered with their independent development but has only enriched their vocabulary rendering their power of expression more pliable and comprehensive. But, Tamil, the premier language of the Dravidian group, stands on an entirely different footing. The Sanskrit words it has borrowed can be counted on one's fingers and they have been thoroughly transformed before they are absorbed in the language. The difficulty of a Tamil scholar to learn Hindi took the form of anti-Hindi agitation during the term of the first Congress Ministry in this Province. A Northern Indian can hardly be expected to appreciate this move as to him the change from his spoken language (Bengali, Marathi, etc.) to Hindi is comparatively easy and can be managed without much conscious effort. But to a Tamilian it is a hard job. He must forget whatever he has learnt about word-formation

gender, case, etc., in his mother-tongue before he takes up Hindi for special study. The absence of aspirates in Tamil which constitutes a prominent feature of the Indo-Aryan group of languages of the North is another hard nut to crack. He becomes nervous about Hindi accent and pronunciation.

Regional Language

Under the new dispensation which has made a divided India an accomplished fact, the question of a lingua franca seems to be receding to the background. The emphasis has been shifted to the regional language. This change in the policy found expression in a circular issued by the congress ministry in this province asking the educational institutions to give instructions in the medium of the languages of the place. This raised a hue and cry in metropolitan cities like Madras where people speaking various languages are permanently residing, and where till now instruction in non-language subjects was imparted in English. Apart from the paucity of qualified teachers to work the new scheme, the question was often raised in Madras whether the regional language of the city was Tamil or Telugu. While historical tradition supports the claim of Telugu, numerical strength favours that of Tamil. Besides in cities like Madras which in fact is an epitome of all India to which people speaking various languages current in India resort for different reasons, official and non-official, and where such diverse interests are to be encouraged for the prestige of the city itself, special provisions have to be made to suit the requirements of all groups if their importance and number justify such a concession. It must also be stated in this connection that while the conception of a common language inculcates the idea of unity of the nation, the emphasis on the regional language operates exactly in the opposite direction and may ultimately lead to disintegration and friction. In this transitional stage when co-operation from all is essential to render the gift of freedom an unqualified success and avoid dangers emanating from jealous and ambitious neighbours before Independent India is able to stand firm on her own legs, such a policy may not yield the best results.

Official Language

The language problem therefore bristles with difficulties and complications and calls for very careful handling. Indian Union now forms a distinct entity by itself and its unity must be preserved for obvious reasons. One common language for official correspondence has to be used, now that we have to bid good-bye to English. Or shall we retain English ? We cannot dispense with it entirely as our relationship with Great Britain is to continue for some time longer and the value of English as an international medium is still high. Shall we retain it for some time more as the common language as it will serve both national and international ends ? But our sense of patriotism—our abiding faith in our culture and civilization, our conception of their future form and development will give an emphatic NO to this question. Then the choice falls on a language that is spoken by the largest number of people within the Indian Union. If the division of India and consequent migration of population to various places will not seriously interfere with our census statistics, I am sure, Hindi will get the majority vote. For the sake of national unity and glory that vote must be accepted by North or South irrespective of other considerations. Hindi has to be studied as we were till now studying English which should, however, find its place in the list of optional languages, and be prescribed as an essential qualification for recruits to Foreign Relations department.

To revert to the regional languages again—the term Vernaculars is not liked by eminent writers and I would therefore use the expression Indian Languages—I refer to the major languages already mentioned in the introductory portion of this article. There must be ample scope for their development and cultivation. Want of encouragement and undue emphasis on the study of classical languages have hampered their progress on their own lines for a considerable period. Most of them have proved their immense potentiality through their classics. Their innate irresistible strength and virility to develop even under diverse environments, has also been remarkable. English education has drawn them out from their obscurity and their capacity to absorb and cultivate modern literary forms and methods has been very much in evidence in recent times. Their use during the recent world war for propaganda purposes has given them a fresh impetus and vigour. But the classical tradition has still its glamour. Poets and scholars in Indian Languages have yet to attain the distinction and recognition which is their legitimate due. A Professor in an Indian Language except in Bengal and Hyderabad does not enjoy the status of his colleague in other subjects although his qualifications and work are by no means less in range and scope. In fact he labours more while his remuneration is less. Our leaders who have travelled from one end of the country to the other have realized their value and the strength of their appeal to the masses. It is therefore expected that the Indian Languages have a bright future under the new dispensation. The people have begun to show their regard and esteem towards scholars and writers in their mother-tongue. But their support alone will not make much headway. Without State patronage—now State is identified with the people—the picture will be incomplete. Shall we hope that our champions will elevate our Mother-tongue as they have done our Mother Country ?

ANSWERING a question on the proposals to start an iron and steel mill in Salem, the Hon'ble Minister for Industries said—

(a) The question of starting the mill is under consideration.

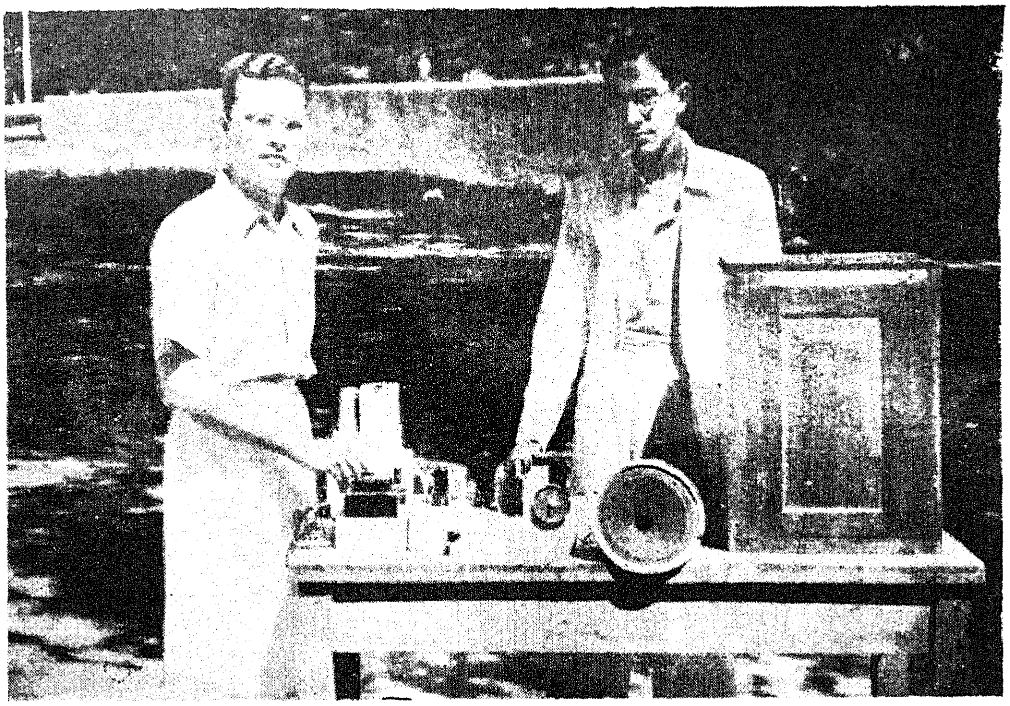
(b) No permission from the Government of India is required for starting an Iron and Steel Factory.

(c) It will in all probability be a State concern if finally it is decided to establish the mill.

THE Government have sanctioned an allotment of Rs. 5,025 towards the alleviation of distress caused by the fire accident in Tenali town, Guntur district, on 6th June 1947. The amount will be disbursed at the rate of Rs. 30 to each of the 92 house owners to enable them to rebuild their houses and at Rs. 15 to each of the 151 affected families as a matter of grace for the purchase of clothing.

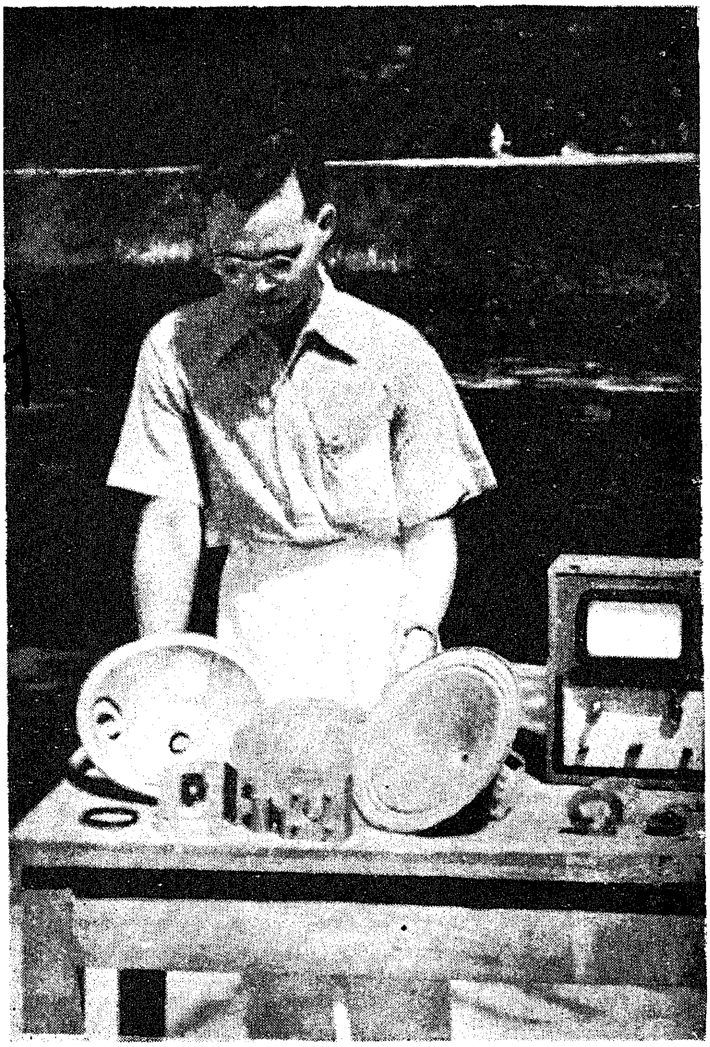
A number of requests have, of late, been received by the Government in the Development Department for copies of the Preliminary Report of the Industrial Planning Committee. The public are informed that copies of the publication are available for sale with the Superintendent, Government Press, Mint Buildings, Madras, for a price of As. 10 a copy.

PROVINCIAL BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT



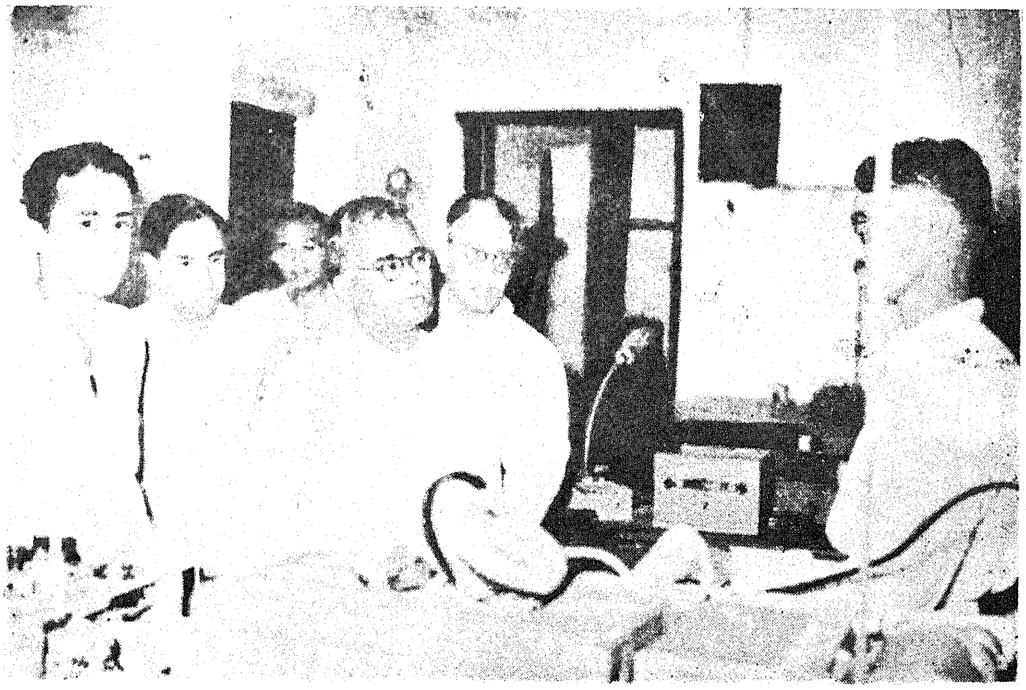
Model Community Receiver being assembled in the Departmental Laboratories

CONNEMARA PUBLIC LIBRARY MADRAS



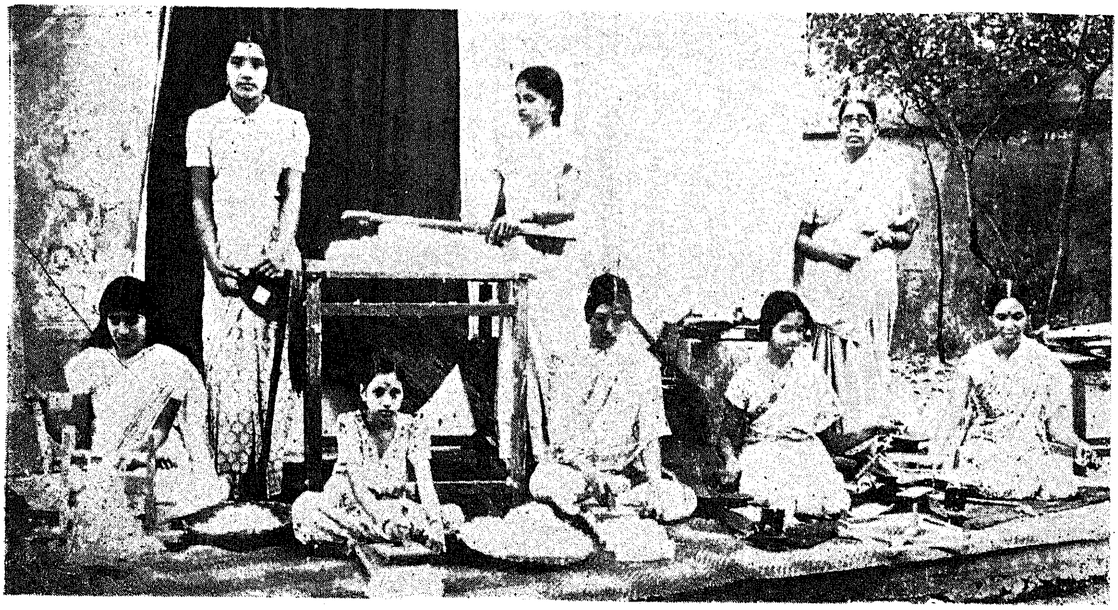
The loud speaker and its parts and multi-meter, being manufactured and assembled in the Research Department

Registered No. M 4767.



Visit of the Hon'ble Mr. Bhaktavatsalam to the Workshops of the Provincial Broadcasting Department

MADRAS



A group of Lady Students at the Chidambaram Khadi Vidyalaya

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